

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

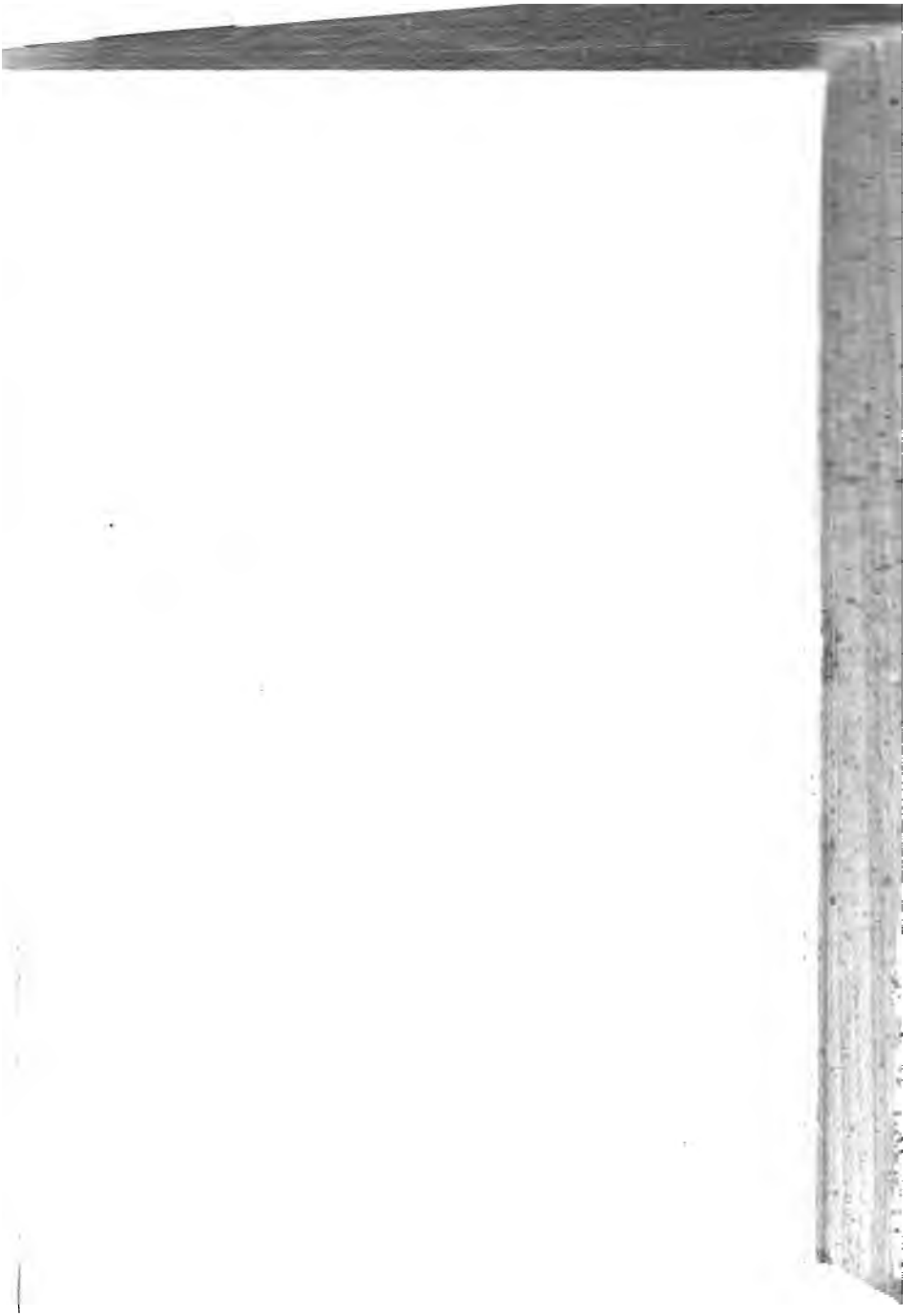
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



932t
M927
S
1901





SHAKESPEARE

AS A DRAMATIC ARTIST

MOULTON

HENRY FROWDE, M. A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH
NEW YORK

SHAKESPEARE

AS

A DRAMATIC ARTIST

A POPULAR ILLUSTRATION OF

THE PRINCIPLES OF SCIENTIFIC CRITICISM

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION.

BY

RICHARD G. MOULTON
A.M. (CANTAB.), PH. D. (PENN.)

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, LATE LECTURER TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY (EXTENSION), TO THE LONDON AND TO THE AMERICAN SOCIETIES FOR THE EXTENSION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHING

THIRD EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
1901

932t
M927
S
1901

OXFORD
PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
BY HORACE HART, M.A.
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

10-1-01
1498

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

PR 2995
M7
1901
MAIN

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

THE present edition is distinguished by two features. In the first place, the list of plays treated in Part First has been enlarged by three,—*Othello*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *As You Like It*. The Study of *Othello* has been made No. XI, to associate it with previous Studies of *Julius Cæsar* and *Lear*, since it connects Character and Plot as these had connected Passion and Movement. The Studies of *Love's Labour's Lost* and *As You Like It* (Nos. XIV, XV) are placed after those on *The Tempest*, and carry further the topics of Central Ideas and Dramatic Colouring. The new matter is the substance of papers read at various times before the New Shakspere Society of London.

Such additions to Part First involve, according to the plan of the whole work, additions of detail and restatements of various points in Part Second. But besides these there is a change of a more general character in Part Second, which makes the other main feature of this edition. It has always been my contention that the Science of Dramatic Criticism admits at present of no systematisation other than a digest of critical topics,

366091

and such a digest must always be provisional. One of the most difficult problems in this science is the proper treatment of Dramatic Movement, to determine whether its relations with Passion or with Plot are the closer, or whether indeed it does not constitute a fundamental division of Drama by itself. In previous editions I have treated this problem by making a compromise, which separated Motive Force from Motive Form, associating the former with Passion and the latter with Plot. Further experience has led me to think that it is more accurate—as it is certainly simpler—to treat the whole of Movement as a division of Plot, leaving Passion-Movement to be represented by successions of Tone. A glance at the Table of Topics on page 398 will make the new scheme clear.

December, 1892.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

In this edition two new Studies, Nos. XI and XII have been added to Part First, dealing with *The Tempest*, and bringing the treatment in that portion of the book, which has for its purpose to illustrate masterpieces of dramatic art in particular plays of Shakespeare, to a natural climax in the discussion of Central Ideas. The new Studies are the substance of a paper read before the New Shakspere Society of London in

January, 1887. Such addition to Part First carries with it, according to the plan of the whole work, additions of detail and restatement of various points in Part Second. A few verbal corrections and alterations have been made in other parts of the book.

July, 1888.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

I HAVE had three objects before me in writing this book. The first concerns the general reader. No one needs assistance in order to perceive Shakespeare's greatness; but an impression is not uncommonly to be found, especially amongst English readers, that Shakespeare's greatness lies mainly in his deep knowledge of human nature, while, as to the technicalities of Dramatic Art, he is at once careless of them and too great to need them. I have endeavoured to combat this impression by a series of Studies of Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist. They are chiefly occupied with a few master-strokes of art, sufficient to illustrate the revolution Shakespeare created in the Drama of the world—a revolution not at once perceived simply because it had carried the Drama at a bound so far beyond Dramatic Criticism that the appreciation of Shakespeare's plays was left to the

uninstructed public, while the trained criticism that ought to have recognised the new departure was engaged in clamouring for other views of dramatic treatment, which it failed to perceive that Shakespeare had rendered obsolete.

While the earlier chapters are taken up with these Studies, the rest of the work is an attempt, in very brief form, to present Dramatic Criticism as a regular Inductive Science. If I speak of this as a new branch of Science I am not ignoring the great works on Shakespeare-Criticism which already exist, the later of which have treated their subject in an inductive spirit. What these still leave wanting is a *recognition* of method in application to the study of the Drama: my purpose is to claim for Criticism a position amongst the Inductive Sciences, and to sketch in outline a plan for the Dramatic side of such a Critical Science.

A third purpose has been to make the work of use as an educational manual. Shakespeare now enters into every scheme of liberal education; but the annotated editions of his works give the student little assistance except in the explanation of language and allusions; and the idea, I believe, prevails that anything like the discussion of literary characteristics or dramatic effect is out of place in an educational work—is, indeed, too 'indefinite' to be 'examined on.' Ten years' experience in connection with the Cambridge University Extension, during which my work has been to teach literature apart from philology, has confirmed my impression that the subject-matter of literature, its

exposition and analysis from the sides of science, history, and art, is as good an educational discipline as it is intrinsically valuable in quickening literary appreciation.

There are two special features of the book to which I may here draw attention. Where practicable, I have appended in the margin references to the passages of Shakespeare on which my discussion is based. (These references are to the Globe Edition.) I have thus hoped to reduce to a minimum the element of personal opinion, and to give to my treatment at least that degree of definiteness which arises when a position stands side by side with the evidence supporting it. I have also endeavoured to meet a practical difficulty in the use of Shakespeare-Criticism as an educational subject. It is usual in educational schemes to name single plays of Shakespeare for study. Experience has convinced me that methodical study of the subject-matter is not possible within the compass of a single play. On the other hand, few persons in the educational stage of life can have the detailed knowledge of Shakespeare's plays as a whole which is required for a full treatment of the subject. The present work is so arranged that it assumes knowledge of only five[1] plays—*The Merchant of Venice, Richard III, Macbeth, Julius Cæsar,* and *King Lear.* Not only in the Studies, but also in the final review, the matter introduced is

[1] A sixth play, *The Tempest*, is added in the Second Edition, and three more in the third Edition, viz.—*Othello, Love's Labour's Lost*, and *As You Like It.*

confined to what can be illustrated out of these five plays. These are amongst the most familiar of the Shakespearean Dramas, or they can be easily read before commencing the book; and if the arrangement is a limitation involving a certain amount of repetition, yet I believe the gain will be greater than the loss. For the young student, at all events, it affords an opportunity of getting what will be the best of all introductions to the whole subject—a thorough knowledge of five plays.

In passing the book through the press I have received material assistance from my brother, Dr. Moulton, Master of the Leys School, and from my College friend, Mr. Joseph Jacobs. With the latter, indeed, I have discussed the work in all its stages, and have been under continual obligation to his stores of knowledge and critical grasp in all departments of literary study. I cannot even attempt to name the many friends—chiefly fellow-workers in the University Extension Movement—through whose active interest in my Shakespeare teaching I have been encouraged to seek for it publication.

RICHARD G. MOULTON.

April, 1885.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.

PLEA FOR AN INDUCTIVE SCIENCE OF LITERARY CRITICISM.

PART FIRST.

SHAKESPEARE CONSIDERED AS A DRAMATIC ARTIST,

IN FIFTEEN STUDIES.

I.

THE TWO STORIES SHAKESPEARE BORROWS FOR HIS 'MERCHANT OF VENICE.'

PAGE

A Study in the Raw Material of the Romantic Drama 43

II.

HOW SHAKESPEARE MANIPULATES THE STORIES IN DRAMATISING THEM.

A Study in Dramatic Workmanship 58

III.

HOW SHAKESPEARE MAKES HIS PLOT MORE COMPLEX IN ORDER TO MAKE IT MORE SIMPLE.

A Study in Underplot 74

IV.

A PICTURE OF IDEAL VILLAINY IN 'RICHARD III.'

PAGE

A Study in Character-Interpretation 90

V.

'RICHARD III': HOW SHAKESPEARE WEAVES NEMESIS INTO HISTORY.

A Study in Plot 107

VI.

HOW NEMESIS AND DESTINY ARE INTERWOVEN IN 'MACBETH.'

A further Study in Plot 125

VII.

MACBETH, LORD AND LADY.

A Study in Character-Contrast 144

VIII.

JULIUS CÆSAR BESIDE HIS MURDERERS AND HIS AVENGER.

A Study in Character-Grouping 168

IX.

HOW THE PLAY OF 'JULIUS CÆSAR' WORKS UP TO A CLIMAX AT THE CENTRE.

A Study in Passion and Movement 185

X.

HOW CLIMAX MEETS CLIMAX IN THE CENTRE OF 'LEAR.'

A Study in more complex Passion and Movement . 202

XI.

'OTHELLO' AS A PICTURE OF JEALOUSY AND INTRIGUE.

A Study in Character and Plot . . . . . PAGE 225

XII.

HOW 'THE TEMPEST' IS A DRAMA OF ENCHANTMENT.

A Study in Dramatic Colouring 246

XIII.

HOW THE ENCHANTMENT OF 'THE TEMPEST' PRESENTS PERSONAL PROVIDENCE.

A Study in Central Ideas 264

XIV.

HOW 'LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST' PRESENTS SIMPLE HUMOUR IN CONFLICT WITH VARIOUS AFFECTATIONS AND CONVENTIONALITIES.

A further Study in Central Ideas 284

XV.

HOW 'AS YOU LIKE IT' PRESENTS VARIED FORMS OF HUMOUR IN CONFLICT WITH A SINGLE CONVENTIONALITY.

A Study of more Complex Dramatic Colouring . . 300

PART SECOND.

SURVEY OF DRAMATIC CRITICISM AS AN INDUCTIVE SCIENCE.

XVI.

TOPICS OF DRAMATIC CRITICISM 317

XVII.

INTEREST OF CHARACTER 330

XVIII.

PAGE
INTEREST OF PASSION 338

XIX.

INTEREST OF PLOT: STATICS 356

XX.

INTEREST OF PLOT: DYNAMICS 370

APPENDIX: TECHNICAL ANALYSIS OF PLOTS 399

INDEXES 417

INTRODUCTION

PLEA FOR AN INDUCTIVE SCIENCE OF LITERARY CRITICISM



INTRODUCTION.

Proposition.

IN the treatment of literature the proposition which seems to stand most in need of assertion at the present moment is, *that there is an inductive science of literary criticism.* As botany deals inductively with the phenomena of vegetable life and traces the laws underlying them, as economy reviews and systematises on inductive principles the facts of commerce, so there is a criticism not less inductive in character which has for its subject-matter literature.

Presumption in favour of inductive literary criticism

The presumption is clearly that literary criticism should follow other branches of thought in becoming inductive. Ultimately, science means no more than organised thought; and amongst the methods of organisation induction is the most practical. To begin with the observation of facts; to advance from this through the arrangement of observed facts; to use *à priori* ideas, instinctive notions of the fitness of things, insight into far probabilities, only as side-lights for suggesting convenient arrangements, the value of which is tested only by the actual convenience in arranging they afford; to be content with the sure results so obtained as 'theory' in the interval of waiting for still surer results based on a yet wider accumulation of facts: this is a regimen for healthy science so widely established in different tracts of thought as almost to rise to that universal acceptance which we call common sense. Indeed the whole progress of science consists in winning fresh fields of thought to the inductive methods.

Current conceptions of criticism coloured by notions other than inductive.

Yet the great mass of literary criticism at the present moment is of a nature widely removed from induction. The prevailing notions of criticism are dominated by the idea of *assaying*, as if its function were to test the soundness and estimate the comparative value of literary work. Lord Macaulay, than whom no one has a better right to be heard on this subject, compares his office of reviewer to that of a king-at-arms, versed in the laws of literary precedence, marshalling authors to the exact seats to which they are entitled. And, as a matter of fact, the bulk of literary criticism, whether in popular conversation or in discussions by professed critics, occupies itself with the merits of authors and works; founding its estimates and arguments on canons of taste, which are either assumed as having met with general acceptance, or deduced from speculations as to fundamental conceptions of literary beauty.

Criticism judicial and inductive. The two distinguished.

It becomes necessary then to recognise two different kinds of literary criticism, as distinct as any two things that can be called by the same name. The difference between the two may be summed up as the difference between the work of a *judge* and of an *investigator*. The one is the enquiry into what ought to be, the other the enquiry into what is. Judicial criticism compares a new production with those already existing in order to determine whether it is inferior to them or surpasses them; criticism of investigation makes the same comparison for the purpose of identifying the new product with some type in the past, or differentiating it and registering a new type. Judicial criticism has a mission to watch against variations from received canons; criticism of investigation watches for new forms to increase its stock of species. The criticism of taste analyses literary works for grounds of preference or evidence on which to found judgments; inductive criticism analyses them to get a closer acquaintance with their phenomena.

Let the question be of Ben Jonson. Judicial criticism

starts by holding Ben Jonson responsible for the decay of the English Drama.

Inductive criticism takes objection to the word 'decay' as suggesting condemnation, but recognises Ben Jonson as the beginner of a new tendency in our dramatic history.

But, judicial criticism insists, the object of the Drama is to pourtray human nature, whereas Ben Jonson has painted not men but caricatures.

Induction sees that this formula cannot be a sufficient definition of the Drama, for the simple reason that it does not take in Ben Jonson; its own mode of putting the matter is that Ben Jonson has founded a school of treatment of which the law is caricature.

But Ben Jonson's caricatures are palpably impossible.

Induction soon satisfies itself that their point lies in their impossibility; they constitute a new mode of pourtraying qualities of character, not by resemblance, but by analysing and intensifying contrasts to make them clearer.

Judicial criticism can see how the poet was led astray; the bent of his disposition induced him to sacrifice dramatic propriety to his satiric purpose.

Induction has another way of putting the matter: that the poet has utilised dramatic form for satiric purpose; thus by the 'cross-fertilisation' of two existing literary species he has added to literature a third including features of both.

At all events, judicial criticism will maintain, it must be admitted that the Shakespearean mode of pourtraying is infinitely the higher: a sign-painter, as Macaulay points out, can imitate a deformity of feature, while it takes a great artist to bring out delicate shades of expression.

Inductive treatment knows nothing about higher or lower, which lie outside the domain of science. Its point is that science is indebted to Ben Jonson for a new species; if the new species be an easier form of art it does not on that account lose its claim to be analysed.

The critic of merit can always fall back upon taste: who would not prefer Shakespeare to Ben Jonson?

But even from this point of view scientific treatment can plead its own advantages. The inductive critic reaps to the full the interest of Ben Jonson, to which the other has been forcibly closing his eyes; while, so far from liking Shakespeare the less, he appreciates all the more keenly Shakespeare's method of treatment from his familiarity with that which is its antithesis.

The two criticisms confused:

It must be conceded at once that both these kinds of criticism have justified their existence. Judicial criticism has long been established as a favourite pursuit of highly cultivated minds; while the criticism of induction can shelter itself under the authority of science in general, seeing that it has for its object to bring the treatment of literature into the circle of the inductive sciences. It is unfortunate, however, that the spheres of the two have not been kept distinct. In the actual practice of criticism the judicial method has obtained an illegitimate supremacy which has thrown the other into the shade; it has even invaded the domain of the criticism that claims to be scientific, until the word *criticism* itself has suffered, and the methodical treatment of literature has by tacit assumption become limited in idea to the judicial method.

conception of critical method limited to judicial method.

Partly a survival of Renaissance influence:

Explanation for this limited conception of criticism is not far to seek. Modern criticism took its rise before the importance of induction was recognised: it lags behind other branches of thought in adapting itself to inductive treatment chiefly through two influences. The first of these is connected with the revival of literature after the darkness of the middle ages. The birth of thought and taste in modern Europe was the Renaissance of classical thought and taste; by Roman and Greek philosophy and poetry the native powers of our ancestors were trained till they became strong enough to originate for themselves. It was natural for their earliest criticism to take the form of applying the

classical standards to their own imitations: now we have advanced so far that no one would propose to test exclusively by classical models, but nevertheless the idea of *testing* still lingers as the root idea in the treatment of literature. Other branches of thought have completely shaken off this attitude of submission to the past: literary criticism differs from the rest only in being later to move. This is powerfully suggested by the fact that so recent a writer as Addison couples science in general with criticism in his estimate of probable progress; laying down the startling proposition that 'it is impossible for us who live in the later ages of the world to make observations in criticism, in morality, *or in any art or science*, which have not been touched upon by others'!

and its testing by classical models.

And even for this lateness a second influence goes far to account. The grand literary phenomenon of modern times is journalism, the huge apparatus of floating literature of which one leading object is to review literature itself. The vast increase of production consequent upon the progress of printing has made production itself a phenomenon worthy of study, and elevated the sifting of production into a prominent literary occupation; by the aid of book-tasters alone can the ordinary reader keep pace with production. It is natural enough that the influence of journalism should pass beyond its natural sphere, and that the review should tend to usurp the position of the literature for which reviewing exists. Now in journalism testing and valuation of literary work have a real and important place. It has thus come about that in the great preponderance of ephemeral over permanent literature the machinery adapted to the former has become applied to the latter: methods proper to journalism have settled the popular conception of systematic treatment; and the bias already given to criticism by the Renaissance has been strengthened to resist the tendency of all kinds of thought towards inductive methods.

Partly that methods of journalism have invaded systematic criticism.

The limitation defended: theory of taste as condensed experience.

History will thus account for the way in which the criticism of taste and valuation tends to be identified with criticism in general: but attempts are not wanting to give the identification a scientific basis. Literary appreciation, it is said, is a thing of culture. A critic in the reviewer's sense is one who has the literary faculty both originally acute and developed by practice: he thus arrives quickly and with certainty at results which others would reach laboriously and after temporary misjudgments. Taste, however arbitrary in appearance, is in reality condensed experience; judicial criticism is a wise economy of appreciation, the purpose of which is to anticipate natural selection and universal experience. He is a good critic who, by his keen and practised judgment, can tell you at once the view of authors and works which you would yourself come to hold with sufficient study and experience.

The theory examined. The judicial spirit a limit on appreciation.

Now in the first place there is a flaw in this reasoning: it omits to take into account that the judicial attitude of mind is itself a barrier to appreciation, as being opposed to that delicacy of receptiveness which is a first condition of sensibility to impressions of literature and art. It is a matter of commonest experience that appreciation may be interfered with by prejudice, by a passing unfavourable mood, or even by uncomfortable external surroundings. But it is by no means sufficient that the reader of literature should divest himself of these passive hindrances to appreciation: poets are pioneers in beauty, and considerable activity of effort is required to keep pace with them. Repetition may be necessary to catch effects—passages to be read over and over again, more than one author of the same school to be studied, effect to be compared with kindred effect each helping the other. Or an explanation from one who has already caught the idea may turn the mind into a receptive attitude. Training again is universally recognised as a necessity for appreciation, and to train is to make receptive.

Beyond all these conditions of perception, and including them, is yet another. It is a foundation principle in art-culture, as well as in human intercourse, that *sympathy is the grand interpreter:* secrets of beauty will unfold themselves to the sunshine of sympathy, while they will wrap themselves all the closer against the tempest of sceptical questionings. Now a judicial attitude of mind is highly unreceptive, for it necessarily implies a restraint of sympathy: every one, remarks Hogarth, is a judge of painting except the connoisseur. The judicial mind has an appearance of receptiveness, because it seeks to shut out prejudice: but what if the idea of judging be itself a prejudice? On this view the very consciousness of fairness, involving as it does limitation of sympathy, will be itself unfair. In practical life, where we have to act, the formation of judgments is a necessity. In art we can escape the obligation, and here the judicial spirit becomes a wanton addition to difficulties of appreciation already sufficiently great; the mere notion of condemning may be enough to check our receptivity to qualities which, as we have seen, it may need our utmost effort to catch. So that the judicial attitude of mind comes to defeat its own purpose, and disturbs unconsciously the impression it seeks to judge; until, as Emerson puts it, 'if you criticise a fine genius the odds are that you are out of your reckoning, and instead of the poet are censuring your caricature of him.'

On the other hand sympathy the great interpreter.

But the appeal made is to experience: to experience let it go. It will be found that, speaking broadly, *the whole history of criticism has been a triumph of authors over critics:* so long as criticism has meant the gauging of literature, so long its progress has consisted in the reversal of critical judgments by further experience. I hesitate to enlarge upon this part of my subject lest I be inflicting upon the reader the tedium of a thrice-told tale. But I believe that the ordinary reader, however familiar with notable blunders of

The theory refuted by experience: the history of criticism a triumph of authors over critics.

criticism, has little idea of that which is the essence of my argument—the degree of regularity, amounting to absolute law, with which criticism, where it has set itself in opposition to freedom of authorship, has been found in time to have pronounced upon the wrong side, and has, after infinite waste of obstructive energy, been compelled at last to accept innovations it had pronounced impossible under penalty of itself becoming obsolete.

Case of the Shakespearean Drama: retiring waves of critical opposition.

Shakespeare-criticism affords the most striking illustration. Its history is made up of wave after wave of critical opposition, each retiring further before the steady advance of Shakespeare's fame. They may almost be traced in the varying apologetic tones of the successive *Variorum* editors, until Reed, in the edition of 1803, is content to leave the poet's renown as established on a basis which will 'bid defiance to the caprices of fashion and the canker of time.'

1. Unmeasured attack.

The first wave was one of unmeasured virulent attack. Rymer, accepted in his own day as the champion of 'regular' criticism, and pronounced by Pope one of the best critics England ever had, says that in Tragedy Shakespeare appears quite out of his element:

> His brains are turned; he raves and rambles without any coherence, any spark of reason, or any rule to control him or set bounds to his phrensy.

The shouting and battles of his scenes are necessary to keep the audience awake, 'otherwise no sermon would be so strong an opiate.' Again:

> In the neighing of an horse, or in the growling of a mastiff, there is a meaning, there is as lively an expression, and, may I say, more humanity, than many times in the tragical flights of Shakespeare.

The famous Suggestion Scene in *Othello* has, in Rymer's view, no point but 'the mops, the mows, the grimace, the grins, the gesticulation.' On Desdemona's

> O good Iago,
> What shall I do to win my lord again?

he remarks that no woman bred out of a pig-stye would talk so meanly. Speaking of Portia he says, 'she is scarce one remove from a natural, she is own cousin-german, of one piece, the very same impertinent flesh and blood with Desdemona.' And Rymer's general verdict of *Othello*—which he considers the best of Shakespeare's tragedies—is thus summed up:

> There is in this play some burlesque, some humour and ramble of comical wit, some show and some mimicry to divert the spectators: but the tragical part is plainly none other than a bloody farce, without salt or savour.

In the eighteenth century Lord Lansdowne, writing on 'Unnatural Flights in Poetry,' could refuse to go into the question of Shakespeare's soliloquies, as being assured that 'not one in all his works could be excused by reason or nature.' The same tone was still later kept up by Voltaire, who calls Shakespeare a writer of monstrous farces called tragedies; says that nature had blended in him all that is most great and elevating with all the basest qualities that belong to barbarousness without genius; and finally proceeds to call his poetry the fruit of the imagination of an intoxicated savage.—Meanwhile a second wave of opinion had arisen, not conceiving a doubt as to the total inadmissibility of the Shakespearean Drama, yet feeling its attraction. This is perhaps most exactly illustrated in the forgotten critic Edwards, who ruled that 'poor Shakespeare'—the expression is his own—must be excluded from the number of good tragedians, yet 'as Homer from the Republic of Plato, with marks of distinction and veneration.' But before this the more celebrated dramatists of the Restoration had shown the double feeling in the way they reconstructed Shakespeare's plays, and turned them into 'correct' dramas. Thus Otway made the mediæval Capulets and Montagus presentable by giving them a classical dress as followers of Marius and Sulla; and even Dryden joined in a polite version of *The*

2. *The Shakespearean Drama held inadmissible, yet attractive.*

Tempest, with an original touch for symmetry's sake in the addition to the heroine Miranda, a maid who had never seen a man, of a suitable hero, a man who had never seen a maid.—Against loud abuse and patronising reconstruction the silent power of Shakespeare's works made itself more and more felt, and we reach a third stage when the Shakespearean Drama is accepted as it stands, but with excuses. Excuse is made for the poet's age, in which the English nation was supposed to be struggling to emerge from barbarism. Heywood's apology for uniting light and serious matter is allowed, that 'they who write to all must strive to please all.' Pope points out that Shakespeare was dependent for his subsistence on pleasing the taste of tradesmen and mechanics; and that his 'wrong choice of subjects' and 'wrong conduct of incidents,' his 'false thoughts and forced expressions' are the result of his being forced to please the lowest of the people and keep the worst of company. Similarly Theobald considers that he schemed his plots and characters from romances simply for want of classical information.—With the last name we pass to yet another school, with whom Shakespeare's work as a whole is not felt to need defence, and the old spirit survives only in their distribution of praise and blame amongst its different parts. Theobald opens his preface with the comparison of the Shakespearean Drama to a splendid pile of buildings, with 'some parts finished up to hit the taste of a connoisseur, others more negligently put together to strike the fancy of a common beholder.' Pope—who reflects the most various schools of criticism, often on successive pages—illustrates this stage in his remark that Shakespeare has excellences that have elevated him above all others, and almost as many defects; 'as he has certainly written better so he has perhaps written worse than any other.' Dr. Johnson sets out by describing Shakespeare as 'having begun to assume the dignity of an ancient'—the highest com-

3. *The Shakespearean Drama admitted with excuses.*

4. *The Shakespearean Drama not felt to need defence as a whole, but praised and blamed in its parts.*

mendation in his eyes. But he goes on to point out the inferiority of Shakespeare's Tragedy to his Comedy, the former the outcome of skill rather than instinct, with little felicity and always leaving something wanting; how he seems without moral purpose, letting his precepts and axioms drop casually from him, dismissing his personages without further care, and leaving the examples to operate by chance; how his plots are so loosely formed that they might easily be improved, his set speeches cold and weak, his incidents imperfectly told in many words which might be more plainly described in few. Then in the progress of his commentary, he irritates the reader, as Hallam points out, by the magisterial manner in which he dismisses each play like a schoolboy's exercise.—At last comes a revolution in criticism and a new order of things arises; with Lessing to lead the way in Germany and Coleridge in England, a school of critics appear who are in complete harmony with their author, who question him only to learn the secrets of his art. The new spirit has not even yet leavened the whole of the literary world; but such names as Goethe, Tieck, Schlegel, Victor Hugo, Ulrici, Gervinus suggest how many great reputations have been made, and reputations already great have been carried into a new sphere of greatness, by the interpretation and unfolding of Shakespeare's greatness: not one critic has in recent years risen to eminence by attacking Shakespeare.

5. *Finally criticism comes round entirely to Shakespeare.*

And the Shakespearean Drama is only the most illustrious example of authors triumphing over the criticism that attempted to judge them. It is difficult for a modern reader to believe that even Rymer could refer to the *Paradise Lost* as 'what some are pleased to call a poem'; or that Dr. Johnson could assert of the minor poems of Milton that they exhibit 'peculiarity as distinguished from excellence,' 'if they differ from others they differ for the worse.' He says of *Comus* that it is 'inelegantly splendid and tediously

Other examples.

Milton.

instructive'; and of *Lycidas*, that its diction is harsh, its rhymes uncertain, its numbers unpleasing, that 'in this poem there is no nature for there is no truth, there is no art for there is nothing new,' that it is 'easy, vulgar, and therefore disgusting,'—after which he goes through the different parts of the poem to show what Milton should have done in each. Hallam has pointed out how utterly impotent Dr. Johnson has been to fix the public taste in the case of these poems; yet even Hallam could think the verse of the poet who wrote *Paradise Lost* sufficiently described by the verdict, 'sometimes wanting in grace and almost always in ease.' In the light of modern taste it is astonishing indeed to find Steevens, with his devotion of a lifetime to Shakespeare, yet omitting the Sonnets from the edition of 1793, 'because the strongest Act of Parliament that could be framed would not compel readers into their service.' It is equally astonishing to find Dryden speaking of Spenser's 'ill choice of stanza,' and saying of the *Faerie Queene* that if completed it might have been more of a piece, but it could not be perfect, because its model was not true: an example followed up in the next century by a 'person of quality,' who translated a book of the *Faerie Queene* out of its 'obsolete language and manner of verse' into heroic couplets. I pass over the crowd of illustrations, such as the fate of Gray at the hands of Dr. Johnson, of Keats at the hands of monthly and quarterly reviewers, or of the various Waverley Novels capriciously selected by different critics as examples of literary suicide. But we have not yet had time to forget how Jeffrey —one of the greatest names in criticism—set in motion the whole machinery of reviewing in order to put down Wordsworth. Wordsworth's most elaborate poem he describes as a 'tissue of moral and devotional ravings,' a 'hubbub of strained raptures and fantastical sublimities': his 'effusions on . . . the physiognomy of external nature' he characterises as 'eminently fantastic, obscure, and affected.' Then, to

Shakespeare's Sonnets.

Spenser.

Gray.

Keats.

Waverley Novels.

Wordsworth.

find a climax, he compares different species of Wordsworth's poetry to the various stages of intoxication: his Odes are 'glorious delirium' and 'incoherent rapture,' his Lyrical Ballads a 'vein of pretty deliration,' his *White Doe* is 'low and maudlin imbecility.' Not a whit the less has the influence of Wordsworth deepened and solidified; and if all are not yet prepared to accept him as the apostle of a new religion, yet he has tacitly secured his place in the inner circle of English poets. In fine, the work of modern criticism is seriously blocked by the perpetual necessity of revising and reversing what this same Jeffrey calls the 'impartial and irreversible sentences' of criticism in the past. And as a set-off in the opposite scale only one considerable achievement is to be noted: that journalism afforded a medium for Macaulay to quench the light of Robert Montgomery, which, on Macaulay's own showing, journalism had puffed into a flame.

Robert Montgomery.

It is the same with the great literary questions that have from time to time arisen, the pitched battles of criticism: as Goldsmith says, there never has been an unbeaten path trodden by the poet that the critic has not endeavoured to recall him by calling his attempt an innovation. Criticism set its face steadily from the first against blank verse in English poetry. The interlocutors in Dryden's *Essay on the Drama* agree that it is vain to strive against the stream of the people's inclination, won over as they have been by Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher; but, as they go on to discuss the rights of the matter, the most remarkable thing to a modern reader is that the defence of blank verse is made to rest only on the colloquial character of dramatic poetry, and neither party seems to conceive the possibility of non-dramatic poetry other than in rhyme. Before Dryden's *Essay on Satire* the *Paradise Lost* had made its appearance; but so impossible an idea is literary novelty to the 'father of English criticism' that Dryden in this Essay

Defeat of criticism in the great literary questions.

Blank verse.

refuses to believe Milton's own account of the matter, saying that, whatever reasons Milton may allege for departing from rhyme, 'his own particular reason is plainly this, that rhyme was not his talent, he has neither the ease of doing it nor the graces of it.' To one so steeped in French fashions as Rymer, poetry that lacks rhyme seems to lack everything; many of Shakespeare's scenes might, he says, do better without words at all, or at most the words set off the action like the drone of a bagpipe. Voltaire estimates blank verse at about the same rate, and having to translate some of Shakespeare's for purposes of exact comparison, he remarks that blank verse costs nothing but the trouble of dictating, that it is not more difficult to write than a letter. Dr. Johnson finds a theoretic argument in the unmusical character of English poetry to prove the impossibility of its ever adapting itself to the conditions of blank verse, and is confident enough to prophesy: 'poetry may subsist without rhyme, but English poetry will not often please.' Even Byron is found only one degree more tolerant than Dryden: he has the grace to except Milton from his dictum that no one ever wrote blank verse who could rhyme. Thus critical taste, critical theory, and critical prophecy were unanimous against blank verse as an English measure: for all that it has become the leading medium of English poetry, and a doubter of to-day would be more likely to doubt the permanence of English rhyme than of English blank verse. As to the famous 'three unities,' not only the principles themselves, but even the refutation of them has now become obsolete. Yet this stickling for the unities has been merely the chief amongst many examples of the proneness the critical mind has exhibited towards limiting literary appreciation and production by single standards of taste. The same tone of mind that contended for the classical unities had in an earlier generation contended for the classical languages as the sole vehicle of literary expression, and the modern lan-

The 'three unities':

and limitations by still narrower classical standards.

guages of Europe had to assert their rights by hard fighting. In Latin literature itself a more successful attempt has been made to limit taste by the writers of a single period, the Augustan age, and so construct a list of Latin poets which omits Lucretius. And for a short period of the Renaissance movement the limitation was carried further to a single one of the Augustan writers, and 'Ciceronianism' struggled hard against the freedom of style it chose to nickname 'Apuleianism,' till it fell itself before the laughter of Erasmus. It would seem almost to be a radical law of the critical temperament that admiration for the past paralyses faith in the future; while criticism proves totally unable to distinguish between what has been essential in the greatness of its idols and what has been as purely accidental as, to use Scott's illustration, the shape of the drinking-glass is to the flavour of the wine it contains. And if criticism has thus failed in distinguishing what is permanent in past literature, it has proved equally mistaken in what it has assumed to be accidental and transitory. Early commentators on Shakespeare, whatever scruples they may have had upon other points, had no misgivings in condemning the irregularities of his English and correcting his grammar. This was described as obsolete by Dryden half a century after the poet's death; while it is delicious to hear Steevens, in the Advertisement to his edition of 1766, mentioning that 'some have been of opinion that even a particular syntax prevailed in the time of Shakespeare'—a novel suggestion he promptly rejects. If the two could have lived each a century later, Dryden would have found Malone laying down that Shakespeare had been the great purifyer and refiner of our language, and Steevens would have seen Shakespeare's grammar studied with the same minuteness and reduced to the same regular form as the grammar of his commentators and readers; while one of the most distinguished of our modern grammarians, instituting a comparison between Elizabethan and nineteenth-

Criticism failing to distinguish the permanent and transitory.

century English, fancies the representative of the old-fashioned tongue characterising current speech in the words of Sebastian:

> Surely
> It is a sleepy language!

Critical works where inductive retain their force, where judicial have become obsolete.

The critics may themselves be called as chief witnesses against themselves. Those parts of their works in which they apply themselves to analysing and interpreting their authors survive in their full force: where they judge, find fault, and attempt to regulate, they inevitably become obsolete. Aristotle, the founder of all criticism, is for the most part inductive in his method, describing poetry as it existed in his day, distinguishing its different classes and elements, and tabulating its usages: accordingly Aristotle's treatise, though more than two thousand years old, remains the text-book of the Greek Drama. In some places, however, he diverges from his main purpose, as in the final chapter, in which he raises the question whether Epic or Tragic is more excellent, or where he promises a special treatise to discuss whether Tragedy is yet perfect: here he has for modern readers only the interest of curiosity. Dr. Johnson's analysis of 'metaphysical poetry,' Addison's development of the leading effects in *Paradise Lost*, remain as true and forcible to-day as when they were written: Addison constructing an order of merit for English poets with Cowley and Sprat at the head, Dr. Johnson lecturing Shakespeare and Milton as to how they ought to have written—these are to us only odd anachronisms. It is like a contest with atomic force, this attempt at using ideas drawn from the past to mould and limit productive power in the present and future. The critic peers into the dimness of history, and is found to have been blind to what was by his side: Boileau strives to erect a throne of Comedy for Terence, and never suspects that a truer king was at hand in his own personal friend Molière. It is in vain for critics to denounce, their

denunciation recoils on themselves: the sentence of Rymer that the soul of modern Drama was a brutish and not a reasonable soul, or of Voltaire, that Shakespeare's Tragedy would not be tolerated by the lowest French mob, can harm none but Rymer and Voltaire. If the critics venture to prophesy, the sequel is the only refutation of them needed; if they give reasons, the reasons survive only to explain how the critics were led astray; if they lay down laws, literary greatness in the next generation is found to vary directly with the boldness with which authors violate the laws. If they assume a judicial attitude, the judgment-seat becomes converted into a pillory for the judge, and a comic side to literary history is furnished by the mockery with which time preserves the proportions of things, as seen by past criticism, to be laid side by side with the true perspective revealed by actual history. In such wise it has preserved to us the list of 'poets laureate' who preceded Southey: Shadwell, Tate, Rowe, Eusden, Cibber, Whitehead, Warton, Pye. It reveals Dryden sighing that Spenser could only have read the rules of Bossu, or smitten with a doubt whether he might not after all excuse Milton's use of blank verse 'by the example of Hannibal Caro'; Rymer preferring Ben Jonson's *Catiline* to all the tragedies of the Elizabethan age, and declaring Waller's *Poem on the Navy Royal* beyond all modern poetry in any language; Voltaire wondering that the extravagances of Shakespeare could be tolerated by a nation that had seen Addison's *Cato*; Pope assigning three-score years and ten as the limit of posthumous life to 'moderns' in poetry, and celebrating the trio who had rescued from the 'uncivilised' Elizabethan poetry the 'fundamental laws of wit.' These three are Buckingham, Roscommon, and Walsh: as to the last of whom if we search amongst contemporary authorities to discover who he was, we at last come upon his works described in the *Rambler* as 'pages of inanity.'

But in the conflict between judicial criticism and science

In actual practice criticism is found to have gradually approached induction.

the most important point is to note how the critics' own ideas of criticism are found to be gradually slipping away from them. Between the Renaissance and the present day criticism, as judged by the methods actually followed by critics, has slowly changed from the form of laying down laws to authors into the form of receiving laws from authors.

Five stages.

The process of change falls into five stages. In its first stage the conception of criticism was bounded by the notion of comparing whatever was produced with the masterpieces and trying it by the ideas of Greek and Roman literature.

1. Idea of judging solely by classical standards.

Boileau objected to Corneille's tragedies, not because they did not excite admiration, but because admiration was not one of the tragical passions as laid down by Aristotle. To Rymer's mind it was clearly a case of classical standards or no standards, and he describes his opponents as 'a kind of stage-quacks and empirics in poetry who have got a receipt to please.' And there is a degree of *naïveté* in the way in which Bossu betrays his utter unconsciousness of the possibility that there should be more than one kind of excellence, where, in a passage in which he is admitting that the moderns have as much spirit and as lucky fancies as the ancients, he nevertheless calls it 'a piece of injustice to pretend that our new rules destroy the fancies of the old masters, and that they must condemn all their works who could not foresee all our humours.' Criticism in this spirit is notably illustrated by the Corneille incident in the history of the French Academy. The fashionable literary world, led by a Scudéry, solemnly impeach Corneille of originality, and Richelieu insists on the Academy pronouncing judgment; which they at last do, unwillingly enough, since, as Boileau admitted, all France was against them. The only one that in the whole incident retained his sense of humour was the victim himself; who, early in the struggle, being confronted by critics recognising no merit but that of obedience to rules, set himself to write his *Clitandre* as a

play which should obey all the rules of Drama and yet have nothing in it: 'in which,' he said, 'I have absolutely succeeded.'—But this reign of simple faith began to be disturbed by sceptical doubts: it became impossible entirely to ignore merit outside the pale of classical conformity. Thus we get a Dennis unable to conceal his admiration for the daring of Milton, as a man who knew the rules of Aristotle, 'no man better,' and yet violated them. Literature of the modern type gets discussed as it were under protest. Dr. Johnson, when he praises Addison's *Cato* for adhering to Aristotle's principles 'with a *scrupulousness* almost unexampled on the English stage,' is reflecting the constant assumption throughout this transitional stage, that departure from classical models is the result of carelessness, and that beauties in such offending writers are lucky hits. The spirit of this period is distinctly brought out by Dr. Johnson where he 'readily allows' that the union in one composition of serious and ludicrous is 'contrary to the rules of criticism,' but, he adds, 'there is always an appeal open from criticism to nature.'—Once admitted to examination the force of modern literature could not fail to assert its equality with the literature of the ancients, and we pass into a third stage of criticism when critics grasp the conception that there may be more than one set of rules by which authors may be judged. The new notion made its appearance early in the country which was the main stronghold of the opposite view. Perrault in 1687 instituted his 'Parallels' between the ancients and the moderns to the advantage of the latter; and the question was put in its naked simplicity by Fontenelle, the 'Nestor of literature,' when he made it depend upon another question, 'whether the trees that used to grow in our woods were larger than those which grow now.' Later, and with less distinctness, English criticism followed the lead. Pope, with his happy indifference to consistency, after illustrating the first stage where he advises to write 'as

2. Recognition of modern as illegitimate merit.

3. Modern standards of judging side by side with ancient.

if the Stagirite o'erlooked each line,' and where he contends that if the classical writers indulge in a licence that licence becomes a law to us, elsewhere lays down that to apply ancient rules in the treatment of modern literature is to try by the laws of one country a man belonging to another. In one notable instance the genius of Dr. Johnson rises superior to the prejudices of his age, and he vindicates in his treatment of Shakespeare the conception of a school of Drama in which the unities of time and place do not apply. But he does it with trembling: 'I am almost frightened at my own temerity; and when I estimate the fame and the strength of those who maintain the contrary opinion, am ready to sink down in reverential silence.'—Criticism had set out with judging by one set of laws, it had come to judge by two: the change began to shake the notion of *judging* as the function of criticism, and the eyes of critics came to be turned more to the idea of literary beauty itself, as the end for which the laws of literary composition were merely means. Addison is the great name connected with this further transitional stage. We find Addison not only arguing negatively that 'there is sometimes a greater judgment shown in deviating from the rules of art than in adhering to them,' but even laying down as a positive theory that the true function of a critic is 'to discover the concealed beauties of a writer'; while the practical illustration of his theory which he gave in the case of the *Paradise Lost* is supposed to have revolutionised the opinion of the fashionable reading-public.—Addison was removed by a very little from the final stage of criticism, the conception of which is perhaps most fully brought out by Gervinus, where he declares his purpose of treating Shakespeare as the 'revealing genius' of his department of art and of its laws. Thus slowly and by gradual stages has the conception of criticism been changing in the direction of induction: starting from judgment by the laws of the ancient classics as standard

4. Conception of criticism as judging begins to waver;

changing to the search for beauties;

5. and finally to investigation of laws in literature as it stands.

beyond which there is no appeal, passing through the transitional stage of greater and greater toleration for intrinsic worth though of a modern type, to arrive at the recognition of modern standards of judgment side by side with ancient; again passing through a further transitional stage of discrediting judgment altogether as the purpose of criticism in favour of the search for intrinsic worth in literature as it stands, till the final conception is reached of analysing literature as it stands for the purpose of discovering its laws in itself. The later stages do not universally prevail yet. But the earlier stages have at all events become obsolete; and there is no reader who will not acquiesce cheerfully in one of the details Addison gives out for his ideal theatre, by which Rymer's tragedy *Edgar* was to be cut up into snow to make the Storm Scene in Shakespeare's *Lear*.

Separateness of the two criticisms.

It may be well to recall the exact purpose to which the present argument is intended to lead. The purpose is not to attack journalism and kindred branches of criticism in the interests of inductive treatment. It would be false to the principles of induction not to recognise that the criticism of taste has long since established its position as a fertile branch of literature. Even in an inductive system journalism would still have place as a medium for fragmentary and tentative treatment. Moreover it may be admitted that induction in its formal completeness of system can never be applied in practical life; and in the intellectual pursuits of real life trained literary taste may be a valuable acquisition. What is here attacked is the mistake which has identified the criticism of taste and valuation with the conception of criticism as a whole; the intrusion of methods belonging to journalism into treatment that claims to be systematic. So far from being a standard of method in the treatment of literature, criticism of the reviewer's order is outside science altogether. It finds its proper place on the creative side of literature, as a branch

Criticism of taste belongs to creative literature:

in which literature itself has come to be taken as a theme for literary writing; it thus belongs to the literature treated, not to the scientific treatment of it. Reviews so placed may be regarded almost as the lyrics of prose: like lyric poems they have their completeness in themselves, and their interest lies, not in their being parts of some whole, but in their flashing the subjectivity of a writer on to a variety of isolated topics; they thus have value, not as fragments of literary science, but as fragments of Addison, of Jeffrey, of Macaulay. Nor is the bearing of the present argument that commentators should set themselves to eulogise the authors they treat instead of condemning them (though this would certainly be the safer of two errors). The treatment aimed at is one independent of praise or blame, one that has nothing to do with merit, relative or absolute. The contention is for a branch of criticism separate from the criticism of taste; a branch that, in harmony with the spirit of other modern sciences, reviews the phenomena of literature as they actually stand, enquiring into and endeavouring to systematise the laws and principles by which they are moulded and produce their effects. Scientific criticism and the criticism of taste have distinct spheres: and the whole of literary history shows that the failure to keep the two separate results only in mutual confusion.

as the lyrics of prose.

Application of induction to literary subject-matter.

Our present purpose is with inductive criticism. What, by the analogy of other sciences, is implied in the inductive treatment of literature?

The inductive sciences occupy themselves directly with facts, that is, with phenomena translated by observation into the form of facts; and soundness of inductive theory is measured by the closeness with which it will bear confronting with the facts. In the case of literature and art the facts are to be looked for in the literary and artistic productions themselves: the dramas, epics, pictures, statues, pillars, capitals, symphonies, operas—the details of these are the phenomena which the critical observer translates into facts.

A picture is a title for a bundle of facts: that the painter has united so many figures in such and such groupings, that he has given such and such varieties of colouring, and such and such arrangement of light and shade. Similarly the *Iliad* is a short name implying a large number of facts characterising the poem: that its principal personages are Agamemnon and Achilles, that these personages are represented as displaying certain qualities, doing certain deeds, and standing in certain relations to one another.

Difficulty: the want of positiveness in literary impressions.

Here, however, arises that which has been perhaps the greatest stumbling-block in the way of securing inductive treatment for literature. Science deals only with ascertained facts: but the details of literature and art are open to the most diverse interpretation. They leave conflicting impressions on different observers, impressions both subjective and variable in themselves, and open to all manner of distracting influences, not excepting that of criticism itself. Where in the treatment of literature is to be found the positiveness of subject-matter which is the first condition of science?

The difficulty not confined to literature.

In the first place it may be pointed out that this want of certainty in literary interpretation is not a difficulty of a kind peculiar to literature. The same object of terror will affect the members of a crowd in a hundred different ways, from presence of mind to hysteria; yet this has not prevented the science of psychology from inductively discussing fear. Logic proposes to scientifically analyse the reasoning processes in the face of the infinite degrees of susceptibility different minds show to proof and persuasion. It has become proverbial that taste in art is incapable of being settled by discussion, yet the art of music has found exact treatment in the science of harmony. In the case of these well-established sciences it has been found possible to separate the variable element from that which is the subject-matter of the science: such a science as psychology really covers two distinct branches of thought, the psychology that discusses formally

the elements of the human mind, and another psychology, not yet systematised, that deals with the distribution of these elements amongst different individuals. It need then be no barrier to inductive treatment that in the case of literature and art the will and consciousness act as disturbing forces, refracting what may be called natural effects into innumerable effects on individual students. It only becomes a question of practical procedure, in what way the interfering variability is to be eliminated.

The variable element to be eliminated by reference not to taste;

It is precisely at this point that *à priori* criticism and induction part company. The *à priori* critic gets rid of uncertainty in literary interpretation by confining his attention to effects produced upon the best minds: he sets up *taste* as a standard by which to try impressions of literature which he is willing to consider. The inductive critic cannot have recourse to any such arbitrary means of limiting his materials; for his doubts he knows no court of appeal except the appeal to the literary works themselves. The astronomer, from the vast distance of the objects he observes, finds the same phenomenon producing different results on different observers, and he has thus regularly to allow for personal errors: but he deals with such discrepancies only by fresh observations on the stars themselves, and it never occurs to him that he can get rid of a variation by abstract argument or deference to a greater observer. In the same way the inductive critic of literature must settle his doubts by referring them to the literary productions themselves; to him the question is not of the nobler view or the view in best taste, but simply what view fits in best with the details as they stand in actual fact. He quite recognises that it is not the objective details but the subjective impressions they produce that make literary effect, but the objective details are the *limit* on the variability of the subjective impressions. The character of Macbeth impresses two readers differently: how is the difference to be settled? The *à priori*

but to the objective details of the literature itself.

critic contends that his conception is the loftier; that a hero should be heroic; that moreover the tradition of the stage and the greatest names in the criticism of the past bear him out; or, finally, falls back upon good taste, which closes the discussion. The inductive critic simply puts together all the sayings and doings of Macbeth himself, all that others in the play say and appear to feel about him, and whatever view of the character is consistent with these and similar facts of the play, that view he selects; while to vary from it for any external consideration would seem to him as futile as for an astronomer to make a star rise an hour earlier to tally with the movements of another star.

We thus arrive at a foundation axiom of inductive literary criticism: *Interpretation in literature is of the nature of a scientific hypothesis, the truth of which is tested by the degree of completeness with which it explains the details of the literary work as they actually stand.* That will be the true meaning of a passage, not which is the most worthy, but which most nearly explains the words as they are; that will be the true reading of a character which, however involved in expression or tame in effect, accounts for and reconciles all that is represented of the personage. The inductive critic will interpret a complex situation, not by fastening attention on its striking elements and ignoring others as oversights and blemishes, but by putting together with business-like exactitude all that the author has given, weighing, balancing, and standing by the product. He will not consider that he has solved the action of a drama by some leading plot, or some central idea powerfully suggested in different parts, but will investigate patiently until he can find a scheme which will give point to the inferior as well as to the leading scenes, and in connection with which all the details are harmonised in their proper proportions. In this way he will be raising a superstructure of exposition that rests, not on authority however high, but upon a basis of indisputable fact.

Foundation axiom of the inductive criticism: Interpretation of the nature of an hypothesis.

Practical objection: Did the authors intend these interpretations?

In actual operation I have often found that such positive analysis raises in the popular mind a very practical objection: that the scientific interpretation seems to discover in literary works much more in the way of purpose and design than the authors themselves can be supposed to have dreamed of. Would not Chaucer and Shakespeare, it is asked, if they could come to life now, be greatly astonished to hear themselves lectured upon? to find critics knowing their purposes better than they had known them themselves, and discovering in their works laws never suspected till after they were dead, and which they themselves perhaps would need some effort to understand? Deep designs are traced in Shakespeare's plots, and elaborate combinations in his characters and passions: is the student asked to believe that Shakespeare really *intended* these complicated effects?

Answer: changed meaning of 'design' in science.

The difficulty rests largely upon a confusion in words. Such words as 'purpose,' 'intention,' have a different sense when used in ordinary parlance from that which they bear when applied in criticism and science. In ordinary parlance a man's 'purpose' means his conscious purpose, of which he is the best judge; in science the 'purpose' of a thing is the purpose it actually serves, and is discoverable only by analysis. Thus science discovers that the 'purpose' of earthworms is to break up the soil, the 'design' of colouring in flowers is to attract insects, though the flower is not credited with foresight nor the worm with disinterestedness. In this usage alone can the words 'purpose,' 'intention,' be properly applied to literature and art: science knows no kind of evidence in the matter of creative purpose so weighty as the thing it has actually produced. This has been well put by Ulrici:

> The *language* of the artist is poetry, music, drawing, colouring: there is no other form in which he can express himself with equal depth and clearness. Who would ask a philosopher to paint his ideas in colours? It would be equally absurd to think that because a poet cannot say with perfect philosophic certainty in the form of reflection and pure thought what it was that he wished and intended to produce,

that he never thought at all, but let his imagination improvise at random.

Nothing is more common than for analysis to discover design in what, so far as consciousness is concerned, has been purely instinctive. Thus physiology ascertains that bread contains all the necessary elements of food except one, which omission happens to be supplied by butter: this may be accepted as an explanation of our 'purpose' in eating butter with bread, without the explanation being taken to imply that all who have ever fed on bread and butter have consciously *intended* to combine the nitrogenous and oleaginous elements of food. It is the natural order of things that the practical must precede the analytic. Bees by instinct construct hexagonal cells, and long afterwards mensuration shows that the hexagon is the most economic shape for such stowage; individual states must rise and fall first before the sciences of history and politics can come to explain the how and why of their mutations. Similarly it is in accordance with the order of things that Shakespeare should produce dramas by the practical processes of art-creation, and that it should be left for others, his critics succeeding him at long intervals, to discover by analysis his 'purposes' and the laws which underlie his effects. The poet, if he could come to life now, would not feel more surprise at this analysis of his 'motives' and unfolding of his unconscious 'design' than he would feel on hearing that the beating of his heart—to him a thing natural enough, and needing no explanation—had been discovered to have a distinct purpose he could never have dreamed of in propelling the circulation of his blood, a thing of which he had never heard.

Three points of contrast between judicial and inductive criticism.

There are three leading ideas in relation to which inductive and judicial criticism are in absolute antagonism: to bring out these contrasts will be the most effective way of describing the inductive treatment.

The first of these ideas is order of merit, together with the

1. *Comparisons of merit: these outside science.*

kindred notions of partisanship and hostility applied to individual authors and works. The minds of ordinary readers are saturated with this class of ideas; they are the weeds of taste, choking the soil, and leaving no room for the purer forms of literary appreciation. Favoured by the fatal blunder of modern education, which considers every other mental power to stand in need of training, but leaves taste and imagination to shift for themselves, literary taste has largely become confused with a spurious form of it: the mere taste for competition, comparison of likes and dislikes, gossip applied to art and called criticism. Of course such likes and dislikes must always exist, and journalism is consecrated to the office of giving them shape and literary expression; though it should be led by experience, if by nothing else, to exercise its functions with a double reserve, recognising that the judicial attitude of mind is a limit on appreciation, and that the process of testing will itself be tried by the test of vitality. But such preferences and comparisons of merit must be kept rigidly outside the sphere of science. Science knows nothing of competitive examination: a geologist is not heard extolling old red sandstone as a model rock-formation, or making sarcastic comments on the glacial epoch. Induction need not disturb the freedom with which we attach ourselves to whatever attracts our individual dispositions: individual partisanship for the wooded snugness of the Rhine or the bold and bracing Alps is unaffected by the adoption of exact methods in physical geography. What is to be avoided is the confusion of two different kinds of interest attaching to the same object. In the study of the stars and the rocks, which can inspire little or no personal interest, it is easy to keep science pure; to keep it to 'dry light,' as Heraclitus calls it, intelligence unclouded by the humours of individual sentiment, as Bacon interprets. But when science comes to be applied to objects which can excite emotion and inspire affection, then confusion arises, and the

scientific student of political economy finds his treatment of pauperism disturbed by the philanthropy which belongs to him as a man. Still more in so emotional an atmosphere as the study of beauty, the student must use effort to separate the *beauty* of an object, which is a thing of art and perfectly analysable, from his personal *interest* in it, which is as distinctly external to the analysis of beauty as his love for his dog is external to the science of zoology. The possibility of thus separating interest and perception of beauty without diminishing either may be sufficiently seen in the case of music—an art which has been already reduced to scientific form. Music is as much as any art a thing of tastes and preferences; besides partialities for particular masters one student will be peculiarly affected by melody, another is all for dramatic effect, others have a special taste for the fugue or the sonata. No one can object to such preferences, but the science of music knows nothing about them; its exposition deals with modes of treatment or habits of orchestration distinguishing composers, irrespective of the private partialities they excite. Mozart and Wagner are analysed as two items in the sum of facts which make up music; and if a particular expositor shows by a turn in the sentence that he has a leaning to one or the other, the slip may do no harm, but for the moment science has been dropped.

Inductive treatment concerned with differences of kind, not of degree.

There is, however, a sort of difference between authors and works, the constant recognition of which would more than make up to cultured pleasure for discarding comparisons of merit. Inductive treatment is concerned with *differences of kind* as distinguished from differences of degree. Elementary as this distinction, the power of firmly grasping it is no slight evidence of a trained mind: the power, that is, of clearly seeing that two things are different, without being at the same time impelled to rank one above the other. The confusion of the two is a constant obstacle in the way of literary appreciation. It has been said; by way of comparison between two

great novelists, that George Eliot constructs characters, but Charlotte Brontë creates them. The description (assuming it to be true) ought to shed a flood of interest upon both authoresses; by perpetually throwing on the two modes of treatment the clear light of contrast it ought to intensify our appreciation of both. As a fact, however, the description is usually quoted to suggest a preference for Charlotte Brontë on the supposed ground that creation is 'higher' than construction; and the usual consequences of preferences are threatened—the gradual closing of our susceptibilities to those qualities in the less liked of the two which do not resemble the qualities of the favourite. Yet why should we not be content to accept such a description (if true) as constituting a difference of kind, and proceed to recognise 'construction' and 'creation' as two parallel modes of treatment, totally distinct from one another in the way in which a fern is distinct from a flower, a distinction allowing no room for preferences because there is no common ground on which to compare? This separateness once granted, the mind, instead of having to choose between the two, would have scope for taking in to the full the detailed effects flowing from both modes of treatment, and the area of mental pleasure would be enlarged. The great blunders of criticism in the past, which are now universally admitted, rest on this inability to recognise differences of kind in literature. The Restoration poets had a mission to bring the heroic couplet to perfection: poetry not in their favourite measure they treated, not as different, but as bad, and rewrote or ignored Spenser and Milton. And generations of literary history have been wasted in discussing whether the Greek dramatists or Shakespeare were the higher: now every one recognises that they constitute two schools different in kind that cannot be compared.

Distinctions of kind a primary element in appreciation.

It is hardly going too far to assert that this sensitiveness to differences of kind as distinguished from differences of degree is the first condition of literary appreciation. Nothing can be

more essential to art-perception than receptiveness, and receptiveness implies a change in the receptive attitude of mind with each variety of art. To illustrate by an extreme case. Imagine a spectator perfectly familiar with the Drama, but to whom the existence of the Opera was unknown, and suppose him to have wandered into an opera-house, mistaking it for a theatre. At first the mistake under which he was labouring would distort every effect: the elaborate overture would seem to him a great 'waste' of power in what was a mere accessory; the opening recitative would strike him as 'unnaturally' delivered, and he would complain of the orchestral accompaniment as a 'distraction'; while at the first aria he would think the actor gone mad. As, however, arias, terzettos, recitatives succeeded one another, he must at last catch the idea that the music was an essential element in the exhibition, and that he was seeing, not a drama, but a drama translated into a different kind of art. The catching of this idea would at once make all the objectionable elements fall into their proper places. No longer distracted by the thought of the ordinary Drama, his mind would have leisure to catch the special effects of the Opera: he would feel how powerfully a change of passion could move him when magnified with all the range of expression an orchestra affords, and he would acknowledge a dramatic touch as the diabolic spirit of the conspirator found vent in a double D. The illustration is extreme to the extent of absurdity: but it brings out how expectation plays an important part in appreciation, and how the expectation has to be adapted to that on which it is exercised. The receptive attitude is a sort of mental focus which needs adjusting afresh to each variety of art if its effects are to be clearly caught; and to disturb attention when engaged on one species of literature by the thought of another is as unreasonable as to insist on one microscopic object appearing definite when looked at with a focus adjusted to another object. This will be acknowledged in reference to the great

Each author a separate species.

divisions of art: but does it not apply to the species as well as the genera, indeed to each individual author? Wordsworth has laid down that each fresh poet is to be tried by fresh canons of taste: this is only another way of saying that the differences between poets are differences of kind, that each author is a 'school' by himself, and can be appreciated only by a receptive attitude formed by adjustment to himself alone. In a scientific treatment of literature, at all events, an elementary axiom must be: *That inductive criticism is mainly occupied in distinguishing literary species.* And on this view it will clearly appear how such notions as order of merit become disturbing forces in literary appreciation: unconsciously they apply the *qualitative* standard of the favourite works to works which must necessarily be explained by a different standard. They are defended on the ground of pleasure, but they defeat their own object: no element in pleasure is greater than variety, and comparisons of merit, with every other form of the judicial spirit, are in reality arrangements for appreciating the smallest number of varieties.

Second axiom of inductive criticism: its function in distinguishing literary species.

II. *The 'laws of art': confusion between law external and scientific.*

The second is the most important of the three ideas, both for its effect in the past and for the sharpness with which it brings judicial and inductive criticism into contrast. It is the idea that there exist 'laws' of art, in the same sense in which we speak of laws in morality or the laws of some particular state—great principles which have been laid down, and which are binding on the artist as the laws of God or his country are binding on the man; that by these, and by lesser principles deduced from these, the artist's work is to be tried, and praise or blame awarded accordingly. Great part of formal criticism runs on these lines; while, next in importance to comparisons of merit, the popular mind considers literary taste to consist in a keen sensitiveness to the 'faults' and 'flaws' of literary workmanship.

This attitude to art illustrates the enormous misleading

power of the metaphors that lie concealed in words. The word 'law,' justly applicable in one of its senses to art, has in practice carried with it the associations of its other sense; and the mistake of metaphor has been sufficient to distort criticism until, as Goldsmith remarks, rules have become the greatest of all the misfortunes which have befallen the commonwealth of letters. Every expositor has had to point out the widespread confusion between the two senses of this term. Laws in the moral and political world are external obligations, restraints of the will; they exist where the will of a ruler or of the community is applied to the individual will. In science, on the other hand, law has to do not with what ought to be, but with what is; scientific laws are facts reduced to formulæ, statements of the habits of things, so to speak. The laws of the stars in the first sense could only mean some creative fiat, such as 'Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven'; in the scientific sense laws of the stars are summaries of their customary movements. In the act of getting drunk I am violating God's moral law, I am obeying his law of alcoholic action. So scientific laws, in the case of art and literature, will mean descriptions of the practice of artists or the characteristics of their works, when these will go into the form of general propositions as distinguished from disconnected details. The key to the distinction is the notion of external authority. There cannot be laws in the moral and political sense without a ruler or legislative authority; in scientific laws the law-giver and the law-obeyer are one and the same, and for the laws of vegetation science looks no further than the facts of the vegetable world. In literature and art the term 'law' applies only in the scientific sense; the laws of the Shakespearean Drama are not laws imposed by some external authority upon Shakespeare, but laws of dramatic practice derived from the analysis of his actual works. Laws of literature, in the sense of external obligations limiting an author, there are none: if he were voluntarily to

The 'laws of art' are scientific laws.

bind himself by such external laws, he would be so far curtailing art; it is hardly a paradox to say the art is legitimate only when it does not obey laws. What applies to the term 'law' applies similarly to the term 'fault.' The term is likely always to be used from its extreme convenience in art-training; but it must be understood strictly as a term of education and discipline. In inductive criticism, as in the other inductive sciences, the word 'fault' has no meaning. If an artist acts contrary to the practice of all other artists, the result is either that he produces no art-effect at all, in which case there is nothing for criticism to register and analyse, or else he produces a new effect, and is thus extending, not breaking, the laws of art. The great clash of horns in Beethoven's Heroic Symphony was at first denounced as a gross fault, a violation of the plainest laws of harmony; now, instead of a 'fault,' it is spoken of as a 'unique effect,' and in the difference between the two descriptions lies the whole difference between the conceptions of judicial and inductive criticism. Again and again in the past this notion of faults has led criticism on to wrong tracks, from which it has had to retrace its steps on finding the supposed faults to be in reality new laws. Immense energy was wasted in denouncing Shakespeare's 'fault' of uniting serious with light matter in the same play as a violation of fundamental dramatic laws; experience showed this mixture of passions to be the source of powerful art-effects hitherto shut out of the Drama, and the 'fault' became one of the distinguishing 'laws' in the most famous branch of modern literature. It is necessary then to insist upon the strict scientific sense of the term 'law' as used of literature and art; and the purging of criticism from the confusion attaching to this word is an essential step in its elevation to the inductive standard. It is a step, moreover, in which it has been preceded by other branches of thought. At one time the practice of commerce and the science of economy suffered under the same confusion: the battle of

The word 'fault' meaningless in inductive treatment.

'free trade' has been fought, the battle of 'free art' is still going on. In time it will be recognised that the practice of artists, like the operations of business, must be left to its natural working, and the attempt to impose external canons of taste on artists will appear as futile as the attempt to effect by legislation the regulation of prices.

Objection as to the moral purpose of literature:

Objections may possibly be taken to this train of argument on very high grounds, as if the protest against the notion of law-obeying in art were a sort of antinomianism. Literature, it may be said, has a moral purpose, to elevate and refine, and no duty can be higher than that of pointing out what in it is elevating and refining, and jealously watching against any lowering of its standard. Such contention may readily be granted, and yet may amount to no more than this: that there are ways of dealing with literature which are more important than inductive criticism, but which are none the less outside it. Jeremy Collier did infinite service to our Restoration Drama, but his was not the service of a scientific critic. The same things take different ranks as they are tried by the standards of science or morals. An enervating climate may have the effect of enfeebling the moral character, but this does not make the geographer's interest in the tropical zone one whit the less. Economy concerns itself simply with the fact that a certain subsidence of profits in a particular trade will drive away capital to other trades. But the details of human experience that are latent in such a proposition: the chilling effects of unsuccess and the dim colour it gives to the outlook into the universe, the sifting of character and separation between the enterprising and the simple, the hard thoughts as to the mysterious dispensations of human prosperity, the sheer misery of a wage-class looking on plenty and feeling starvation—this human drama of failing profits may be vastly more important than the whole science of economy, but economy none the less entirely and rightly ignores it.

this outside inductive treatment, though intrinsically more important.

To some, I know, it appears that literature is a sphere in

Objection: Art as an arbitrary product not subject to law.

which the strict sense of the word 'law' has no application: that such laws belong to nature, not to art. The essence, it is contended, of the natural sciences is the certainty of the facts with which they deal. Art, on the contrary, is creative; it does not come into the category of objective phenomena at all, but is the product of some artist's will, and therefore purely arbitrary. If in a compilation of observations in natural history for scientific use it became known that the compiler had at times drawn upon his imagination for his details, the whole compilation would become useless; and any scientific theories based upon it would be discredited. But the artist bases his work wholly on imagination, and caprice is a leading art-beauty: how, it is asked, can so arbitrary a subject-matter be reduced to the form of positive laws?

Third axiom of inductive criticism: art a part of nature.

In view of any such objections, it may be well to set up a third axiom of inductive criticism: *That art is a part of nature.* Nature, it is true, is the vaguest of words: but this is a vagueness common to the objection and the answer. The objection rests really on a false antithesis, of which one term is 'nature,' while it is not clear what is the other term; the axiom set up in answer implies that there is no real distinction between 'nature' and the other phenomena which are the subject of human enquiry. The distinction is supposed to rest upon the degree to which arbitrary elements of the mind, such as imagination, will, caprice, enter into such a thing as art-production. But there are other things in which the human will plays as much part as it does in art, and which have nevertheless proved compatible with inductive treatment. Those who hold that 'thought is free' do not reject psychology as an inductive science; actual politics are made up of struggles of will, exercises of arbitrary power, and the like, and yet there is a political science. If there is an inductive science of politics, men's voluntary actions in the pursuit of public life, and an inductive science of economy, men's voluntary actions in pursuit of wealth, why should

Other arbitrary products subject to inductive treatment.

there not be an inductive science of art, men's voluntary actions in pursuit of the beautiful? The whole of human action, as well as the whole of external nature, comes within the jurisdiction of science; so far from the productions of the will and imagination being exempted from scientific treatment, will and imagination themselves form chapters in psychology, and caprice has been analysed.

III. *Testing by fixed standards inconsistent with inductive treatment*

It remains to notice the third of the three ideas in relation to which the two kinds of criticism are in complete contrast with one another. It is a vague notion, which no objector would formulate, but which as a fact does underlie judicial criticism, and insensibly accompanies its testing and assaying. It is the idea that the foundations of literary form have reached their final settlement, the past being tacitly taken as a standard for the present and future, or the present as a standard for the past. Thus in the treatment of new literature the idea manifests itself in a secret antagonism to variations from received models; at the very least, new forms are called upon to justify themselves, and so the judicial critic brings his least receptive attitude to the new effects which need receptiveness most. In opposition to this tacit assumption, inductive criticism starts with a distinct counter-axiom of the utmost importance: *That literature is a thing of development.* This axiom implies that the critic must come to literature as to that in which he is expecting to find unlimited change and variety; he must keep before him the fact that production must always be far ahead of criticism and analysis, and must have carried its conquering invention into fresh regions before science, like settled government in the wake of the pioneer, follows to explain the new effects by new principles. No doubt in name literary development is recognised in all criticism; yet in its treatment both of old literature and new the *à priori* criticism is false to development in the scientific sense of the term. Such systems are apt to begin by laying down that 'the object of literature is so and

Fourth axiom of inductive criticism. Literature a thing of development.

Ignoring of development in new literature:

so,' or that 'the purpose of the Drama is to pourtray human nature'; they then proceed to test actual literature and dramas by the degree in which they carry out these fundamental principles. Such procedure is the opposite of the inductive method, and is a practical denial of development in literature. Assuming that the object of existing literature were correctly described, such a formula could not bind the literature of the future. Assuming that there was ever a branch of art which could be reduced to one simple purpose, yet the inherent tendency of the human mind and its productions to develop would bring it about that what were at first means towards this purpose would in time become ends in themselves side by side with the main purpose, giving us in addition to the simple species a modified variety of it; external influences, again, would mingle with the native characteristics of the original species, and produce new species compound in their purposes and effects. The real literature would be ever obeying the first principle of development and changing from simple to complex, while the criticism that tried it by the original standard would be at each step removed one degree further from the only standard by which the literature could be explained. And if judicial criticism fails in providing for development in the future and present, it is equally unfortunate in giving a false twist to development when looked for in the past. The critic of comparative standards is apt to treat early stages of literature as elementary, tacitly assuming his own age as a standard *up to* which previous periods have developed. Thus his treatment of the past becomes often an assessment of the degrees in which past periods have approximated to his own, advancing from literary pot-hooks to his own running facility. The clearness of an ancient writer he values at fifty per cent. as compared with modern standards, his concatenation of sentences is put down as only forty-five. But what if a certain degree of mistiness be an essential element in the

'purpose' in literature continually modifying.

Development in past literature confused with improvement.

phase of literary development to which the particular writer belongs, so that in him modern clearness would become, in judicial phrase, a fault? What if Plato's concatenation of sentences would simply spoil the flavour of Herodotus's story-telling, if Jeremy Taylor's prolixity and Milton's bi-lingual prose be simply the fittest of all dresses for the thought of their age and individual genius? In fact, the critic of fixed standards confuses development with *improvement:* a parallel mistake in natural history would be to understand the statement that man is higher in the scale of development than the butterfly as implying that a butterfly was God's failure in the attempt to make man. The inductive critic will accord to the early forms of his art the same independence he accords to later forms. Development will not mean to him education for a future stage, but the perpetual branching out of literary activity into ever fresh varieties, different in kind from one another, and each to be studied by standards of its own: the 'individuality' of authors is the expression in literary parlance which corresponds to the perpetual 'differentiation' of new species in science. Alike, then, in his attitude to the past and the future, the inductive critic will eschew the temptation to judgment by fixed standards, which in reality means opposing lifeless rules to the ever-living variety of nature. He will leave a dead judicial criticism to bury its dead authors and to pen for them judicious epitaphs, and will himself approach literature filled equally with reverence for the unbroken vitality of its past and faith in its exhaustless future.

Summary. To gather up our results. Induction, as the most universal of scientific methods, may be presumed to apply wherever there is a subject-matter reducible to the form of fact; such a subject-matter will be found in literature where its effects are interpreted, not arbitrarily, but with strict reference to the details of the literary works as they actually stand. There is thus an inductive literary criticism, akin in

spirit and methods to the other inductive sciences, and distinct from other branches of criticism, such as the criticism of taste. This inductive criticism will entirely free itself from the judicial spirit and its comparisons of merit, which is found to have been leading criticism during half its history on to false tracks from which it has taken the other half to retrace its steps. On the contrary, inductive criticism will examine literature in the spirit of pure investigation; looking for the laws of art in the practice of artists, and treating art, like the rest of nature, as a thing of continuous development, which may thus be expected to fall, with each author and school, into varieties distinct in kind from one another, and each of which can be fully grasped only when examined with an attitude of mind adapted to the special variety without interference from without.

To illustrate the criticism thus described in its application to Shakespeare is the purpose of the present work.

The scope of the book is limited to the consideration of Shakespeare in his character as the great master of the Romantic Drama; and its treatment of his dramatic art divides itself into two parts. The first applies the inductive method in a series of Studies devoted to particular plays, and to single important features of dramatic art which these plays illustrate. One of the purposes of this first part is to bring out how the inductive method, besides its scientific interest, has the further recommendation of assisting more than any other treatment to enlarge our appreciation of the author and of his achievements. The second part will use the materials collected in the first part to present, in the form of a brief survey, Dramatic Criticism as an inductive science; enumerating, so far as its materials admit, the leading topics which such a science would treat, and arranging these topics in the logical connection which scientific method requires.

PART FIRST

SHAKESPEARE

CONSIDERED AS A

DRAMATIC ARTIST

IN FIFTEEN STUDIES

I.

The Two Stories Shakespeare borrows for his Merchant of Venice.

A Study in the Raw Material of the Romantic Drama.

Story as the Raw Material of the Romantic Drama.

THE starting-point in the treatment of any work of literature is its position in literary history: the recognition of this gives the attitude of mind which is most favourable for extracting from the work its full effect. The division of the universal Drama to which Shakespeare belongs is known as the 'Romantic Drama,' one of its chief distinctions being that it uses the stories of Romance, together with histories treated as story-books, as the sources from which the matter of the plays is taken; Romances are the *raw material* out of which the Shakespearean Drama is manufactured. This very fact serves to illustrate the elevation of the Elizabethan Drama in the scale of literary development: just as the weaver uses as his raw material that which is the finished product of the spinner, so Shakespeare and his contemporaries start in their art of dramatising from Story which is already a form of art. In the exhibition, then, of Shakespeare as an Artist, it is natural to begin with the raw material which he worked up into finished masterpieces. For illustration of this no play could be more suitable than *The Merchant of Venice*, in which two tales, already familiar in the story form, have been woven together into a single plot: the Story of the Cruel Jew, who entered into a bond with his enemy of which the forfeit was to be a pound of this

CHAP. I.

enemy's own flesh, and the Story of the Heiress and the Caskets. The present study will deal with the stories themselves, considering them as if with the eye of a dramatic artist to catch the points in which they lend themselves to dramatic effect; the next will show how Shakespeare handles the stories in telling them, increasing their dramatic force by the very process of working them up; a third study will point out how, not content with two stories, he has added others in the development of his plot, making it more complex only in reality to make it more simple.

Story of the Jew.

In the Story of the Jew the main point is its special capability for bringing out the idea of *Nemesis*, one of the simplest and most universal of dramatic motives. Described broadly, Nemesis is retribution as it appears in the world of art. In reality the term covers two distinct conceptions: in ancient thought Nemesis was an artistic bond between excess and reaction, in modern thought it is an artistic bond between sin and retribution. The distinction is part of the general difference between Greek and modern views of life. The Greeks may be said to be the most artistic nation of mankind, in the sense that art covered so large a proportion of their whole personality: it is not surprising to find that they projected their sense of art into morals. Aristotle was a moral philosopher, but his system of ethics reads as an artistically devised pattern, in which every virtue is removed at equal distances from vices of excess and defect balancing it on opposite sides. The Greek word for law signifies proportion and distribution, *nomos*; and it is only another form of it that expresses *Nemesis* as the power punishing violations of proportion in things human. Distinct from Justice, which was occupied with crime, Nemesis was a companion deity to Fortune; and as Fortune went through the world distributing the good things of life heedlessly without regard to merit, so Nemesis followed in her steps, and, equally without regard to merit, delighted in cutting down the

Nemesis as a dramatic idea.

Ancient conception: artistic connection between excess and reaction.

prosperity that was high enough to attract attention. Polycrates is the typical victim of such Nemesis: cast off by his firmest ally for no offence but an unbroken career of good luck, in the reaction from which his ally feared to be involved; essaying as a forlorn hope to propitiate by voluntarily throwing in the sea his richest crown-jewel; recognising when this was restored by fishermen that heaven had refused his sacrifice, and abandoning himself to his fate in despair. But Nemesis, to the moral sense of antiquity, could go even beyond visitation on innocent prosperity, and goodness itself could be carried to a degree that invited divine reaction. Heroes like Lycurgus and Pentheus perished for excess of temperance; and the ancient Drama startles the modern reader with an Hippolytus, whose passionate purity brought down on him a destruction prophesied beforehand by those to whom religious duty suggested moderate indulgence in lust.

Modern conception: artistic connection between sin and retribution.

Such malignant correction of human inequalities is not a function to harmonise with modern conceptions of Deity. Yet the Greek notion of Nemesis has an element of permanency in it, for it represents a principle underlying human life. It suggests a sort of elasticity in human experience, a tendency to rebound from a strain; this is the equilibrium of the moral world, the force which resists departure from the normal, becoming greater in proportion as departure from the normal is wider. Thus in commercial speculation there is a safe medium certain to bring profit in the long run; in social ambition there is a certain rise though slow: if a man hurries to be rich, or seeks to rise in public life by leaps and bounds, the spectator becomes aware of a secret force that has been set in motion, as when the equilibrium of physical bodies has been disturbed, which force threatens to drag the aspirant down to the point from which he started, or to debase him lower in proportion to the height at which he rashly aimed. Such a force is 'risk,' and it may remain risk,

CHAP. I.

but if it be crowned with the expected fall the whole is recognised as 'Nemesis.' This Nemesis is deeply embedded in the popular mind and repeatedly crops up in its proverbial wisdom. Proverbs like 'Grasp all, lose all,' 'When things come to the worst they are sure to mend,' exactly express moral equilibrium, and the 'golden mean' is its proverbial formula. The saying 'too much of a good thing' suggests that the Nemesis on departures from the golden mean applies to good things as well as bad; while the principle is made to apply even to the observation of the golden mean itself in the proverb 'Nothing venture, nothing have.' Nevertheless, this side of the whole notion has in modern usage fallen into the background in comparison with another aspect of Nemesis. The grand distinction of modern thought is the predominance in it of moral ideas: they colour even its imagination; and if the Greeks carried their art-sense into morals, modern instincts have carried morals into art. In particular the speculations raised by Christianity have cast the shadow of Sin over the whole universe. It has been said that the conception of Sin is unknown to the ancients, and that the word has no real equivalent in Latin or Classical Greek. The modern mind is haunted by it. Notions of Sin have invaded art, and Nemesis shows their influence: vague conceptions of some supernatural vindication of artistic proportion in life have now crystallised into the interest of watching morals and art united in their treatment of Sin. The link between Sin and its retribution becomes a form of art-pleasure; and no dramatic effect is more potent in modern Drama than that which emphasises the principle that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.

Dramatic Nemesis latent in the Story of the Jew.

Now for this dramatic effect of Nemesis it would be difficult to find a story promising more scope than the Story of the Cruel Jew. It will be seen at once to contain a double nemesis, attaching to the Jew himself and to his

victim. The two moreover represent the different conceptions of Nemesis in the ancient and modern world; Antonio's excess of moral confidence suffers a nemesis of reaction in his humiliation, and Shylock's sin of judicial murder finds a nemesis of retribution in his ruin by process of law. The nemesis, it will be observed, is not merely two-fold, but double in the way that a double flower is distinct from two flowers: it is a nemesis *on* a nemesis; the nemesis which visits Antonio's fault is the crime for which Shylock suffers his nemesis. Again, in that which gives artistic character to the reaction and the retribution the two nemeses differ. Let St. Paul put the difference for us: 'Some men's sins are evident, going before unto judgment; and some they follow after.' So in cases like that of Shylock the nemesis is interesting from its very obviousness and the impatience with which we look for it; in the case of Antonio the nemesis is striking for the very opposite reason, that he of all men seemed most secure against it.

Antonio: perfection and self-sufficiency, the Nemesis of Surprise.

Antonio must be understood as a perfect character: for we must read the play in the light of its age, and intolerance was a mediæval virtue. But there is no single good quality that does not carry with it its special temptation, and the sum of them all, or perfection, has its shadow in self-sufficiency. It is so with Antonio. Of all national types of character the Roman is the most self-sufficient, alike incorruptible by temptation and independent of the softer influences of life: we find that 'Roman honour' is the idea which Antonio's friends are accustomed to associate with him. Further the dramatist contrives to exhibit Antonio to us in circumstances calculated to bring out this drawback to his perfection. In the opening scene we see the dignified merchant-prince suffering under the infliction of frivolous visitors, to which his friendship with the young nobleman exposes him: his tone throughout the interview is that of the barest toleration, and suggests that his courtesies

iii. ii. 297.

CHAP. I.

are felt rather as what is due to himself than what is due to those on whom they are bestowed. When Salarino makes flattering excuses for taking his leave, Antonio replies, first with conventional compliment,

i. i. 60–64.

> Your worth is very dear in my regard,

and then with blunt plainness, as if Salarino were not worth the trouble of keeping up polite fiction:

> I take it, your own business calls on you
> And you embrace the occasion to depart.

i. i. 8.

The visitors, trying to find explanation for Antonio's seriousness, suggest that he is thinking of his vast commercial speculations; Antonio draws himself up:

i. i. 41.

> Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
> My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
> Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
> Upon the fortune of this present year:
> Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

Antonio is saying in his prosperity that *he* shall never be moved. But the great temptation to self-sufficiency lies in his contact, not with social inferiors, but with a moral outcast such as Shylock: confident that the moral gulf between the two can never be bridged over, Antonio has violated dignity as well as mercy in the gross insults he has heaped upon the Jew whenever they have met. In the Bond Scene we see him unable to restrain his insults at the very moment in which he is soliciting a favour from his enemy; the effect reaches a climax as Shylock gathers up the situation in a single speech, reviewing the insults and taunting his oppressor with the solicited obligation:

i. iii. 99, &c.

i. iii. 107–130.

> Well then, it now appears you need my help:
> Go to, then; you come to me, and you say,
> 'Shylock, we would have moneys': you say so;
> You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
> And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
> Over your threshold; moneys is your suit.

There is such a foundation of justice for these taunts that

for a moment our sympathies are transferred to Shylock's side. But Antonio, so far from taking warning, is betrayed beyond all bounds in his defiance; and in the challenge to fate with which he replies we catch the tone of infatuated confidence, the *hybris* in which Greek superstition saw the signal for the descent of Nemesis. CHAP. I.

> I am as like to call thee so again, i. iii. 131.
> To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
> If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
> As to thy friends . . . . . .
> *But lend it rather to thine enemy,*
> *Who, if he break, thou may'st with better face*
> *Exact the penalty.*

To this challenge of self-sufficiency the sequel of the story is the answering Nemesis: the merchant becomes a bankrupt, the first citizen of Venice a prisoner at the bar, the morally perfect man holds his life and his all at the mercy of the reprobate he thought he might safely insult.

Shylock. malignant justice, the Nemesis of Measure for Measure.

So Nemesis has surprised Antonio in spite of his perfectness: but the malice of Shylock is such as is perpetually crying for retribution, and the retribution is delayed only that it may descend with accumulated force. In the case of this second nemesis the Story of the Jew exhibits dramatic capability in the opportunity it affords for the sin and the retribution to be included within the same scene. Portia's happy thought is a turning-point in the Trial Scene on the two sides of which we have the Jew's triumph and the Jew's retribution; the two sides are bound together by the principle of measure for measure, and for each detail of vindictiveness that is developed in the first half of the scene there is a corresponding item of nemesis in the sequel. To begin with, Shylock appeals to the charter of the city. It is one of the distinctions between written and unwritten law that no flagrant injustice can arise out of the latter. If the analogy of former precedents would seem to threaten such an injustice, it is easy in a new case to meet the special

iv. i.

Charter v. statute. iv. i. 38; compare 102, 219.

CHAP. I.

emergency by establishing a new precedent; where, however, the letter of the written law involves a wrong, however great, it must, nevertheless, be exactly enforced. Shylock takes his stand upon written law; indeed upon the strictest of all kinds of written law, for the charter of the city would seem to be the instrument regulating the relations between citizens and aliens—an absolute necessity for a free port—which could not be superseded without international negotiations. But what is the result? As plaintiff in the cause Shylock would, in the natural course of justice, leave the court, when judgment had been given against him, with no further mortification than the loss of his suit. He is about to do so when he is recalled:

compare iii. iii. 26–31.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice, &c.

Unwittingly, he has, by the action he has taken, entangled himself with an old statute law, forgotten by all except the learned Bellario, which, going far beyond natural law, made the mere attempt upon a citizen's life by an alien punishable to the same extent as murder. Shylock had chosen the letter of the law, and by the letter of the law he is to suffer.

iv. i. 314.

Humour v. *quibble.*

Again, every one must feel that the plea on which Portia upsets the bond is in reality the merest quibble. It is appropriate enough in the mouth of a bright girl playing the lawyer, but no court of justice could seriously entertain it for a moment: by every principle of interpretation a bond that could justify the cutting of human flesh must also justify the shedding of blood, which is necessarily implied in such cutting. But, to balance this, we have Shylock in the earlier part of the scene refusing to listen to arguments of justice, and taking his stand upon his 'humour': if he has a whim, he pleads, for giving ten thousand ducats to have a rat poisoned, who shall prevent him? The suitor who rests his cause on a whim cannot complain if it is upset by a quibble. Similarly, throughout the scene, every point in Shylock's

iv. i. 40–62.

justice of malice meets its answer in the justice of nemesis. CHAP. I.
He is offered double the amount of his loan:

Offer of double v. refusal of principal.

> If every ducat in six thousand ducats
> Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,

he answers, he would not accept them in lieu of his bond. iv. i. 318, 336.
The wheel of Nemesis goes round, and Shylock would gladly accept not only this offer but even the bare principal; but he is denied, on the ground that he has refused it in open court. They try to bend him to thoughts of mercy:

Complete security v. total loss.

> How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?

He dares to reply:

> What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?

The wheel of Nemesis goes round, and Shylock's life and all lie at the mercy of the victim to whom he had refused mercy and the judge to whose appeal for mercy he would not listen. In the flow of his success, when every point is being given in his favour, he breaks out into unseemly exultation:

Exultation v. irony.

> A Daniel come to judgement! yea, a Daniel! iv. i. 223, 246, 250, 301, 304.

The ebb comes, and his enemies catch up the cry and turn it against him:

> A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel! iv. i. 313, 317, 323, 333, 340.
> I thank thee, Jew, for *teaching* me that word.

Such then is the Story of the Jew, and so it exhibits nemesis clashing with nemesis, the nemesis of surprise with the nemesis of equality and intense satisfaction.

In the Caskets Story, which Shakespeare has associated with the Story of the Jew, the dramatic capabilities are of a totally different kind. In the artist's armoury one of the most effective weapons is Idealisation: inexplicable touches throwing an attractiveness over the repulsive, uncovering the truth and beauty which lie hidden in the commonplace, and showing how much can be brought out of how little

The Caskets Story.

Idealisation:

CHAP. I.

the exhibition of a commonplace experience in a glorified form.

with how little change. A story will be excellent material, then, for dramatic handling which contains at once some experience of ordinary life, and also the surroundings which can be made to exhibit this experience in a glorified form: the more commonplace the experience, the greater the triumph of art if it can be idealised. The point of the Caskets Story to the eye of an artist in Drama is the opportunity it affords for such an idealisation of the commonest problem in everyday experience—what may be called the Problem of Judgment by Appearances.

Problem of Judgment by Appearances.

In the choice between alternatives there are three ways in which judgment may be exercised. The first mode, if it can be called judgment at all, is to accept the decision of chance—to cast lots, or merely to drift into a decision. An opposite to this is purely rational choice. But rational choice, if strictly interpreted as a logical process, involves great complications. If a man would choose according to the methods of strict reason, he must, first of all, purge himself of all passion, for passion and reason are antagonistic. Next, he must examine himself as to the possibility of latent prejudice; and as prejudice may be unconsciously inherited, he must include in the sphere of his examination ancestral and national bias. Then, he must accumulate all the evidence that can possibly bear upon the question in hand, and foresee every eventuality that can result from either alternative. When he has all the materials of choice before him, he must proceed to balance them against one another, seeing first that the mental faculties employed in the process have been equally developed by training. All such preliminary conditions having been satisfied, he may venture to enquire on which side the balance dips, maintaining his suspense so long as the dip is undecided. And when a man has done all this he has attained only that degree of approach to strictly rational choice which his imperfect nature admits. Such pure reason has no place in real life: judgment in practical affairs

is something between chance and this strict reason; it attempts to use the machinery of rational choice, but only so far as practical considerations proper to the matter in hand allow. This medium choice is what I am here calling Judgment by Appearances, for it is clear that the antithesis between appearance and reality will obtain so long as the materials of choice are scientifically incomplete; the term will apply with more and more appropriateness as the divergence from perfect conditions of choice is greater.

This idealised; a maximum in the issue,

Judgment by Appearances so defined is the only method of judgment proper to practical life, and accordingly an exalted exhibition of it must furnish a keen dramatic interest. How is such a process to be glorified? Clearly Judgment by Appearances will reach the ideal stage when there is the maximum of importance in the issue to be decided and the minimum of evidence by which to decide it. These two conditions are satisfied in the Caskets Story. In questions touching the individual life, that of marriage has this unique importance, that it is bound up with wide consequences which extend beyond the individual himself to his posterity. With the suitors of Portia the question is of marriage with the woman who is presented as supreme of her age in beauty, in wealth and in character; moreover, the other alternative is a vow of perpetual celibacy. So the question at issue in the Caskets Story concerns the most important act of life in the most important form in which it can be imagined to present itself. When we turn to the evidence on which this question is to be decided we find that of rational evidence there is absolutely none. The choice is to be made between three caskets distinguished by their metals and by the accompanying inscriptions:

ii. i. 40, &c.

and a minimum in the evidence.

> Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.
> Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.
> Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.

ii. vii. 5-9.

However individual fancies may incline, it is manifestly im-

CHAP. I.

possible to set up any train of *reasoning* which should discover a ground of preference amongst the three. And it is worth noting, as an example of Shakespeare's nicety in detail, that the successful chooser reads in the scroll which announces his victory,

iii. ii. 132.

> You that choose not by the view,
> Chance *as* fair, and choose *as* true:

Shakespeare does not say '*more* fair,' '*more* true.' This equal balancing of the alternatives will appear still clearer

i. ii. 30–36.

when we recollect that it is an intentional puzzle with which we are dealing, and accordingly that even if ingenuity could discover a preponderance of reason in favour of any one of the three, there would be the chance that this preponderance had been anticipated by the father who set the puzzle. The case becomes like that of children bidden to guess in which hand a sweetmeat is concealed. They are inclined to say the right hand, but hesitate whether that answer may not have been foreseen and the sweetmeat put in the left hand; and if on this ground they are tempted to be sharp and guess the left hand, there is the possibility that this sharpness may have been anticipated, and the sweetmeat kept after all in the right hand. If then the Caskets Story places before us three suitors, going through three trains of intricate reasoning for guidance in a matter on which their whole future depends, whereas we, the spectators, can see that from the nature of the case no reasoning can possibly avail them, we have clearly the Problem of Judgment by Appearances drawn out in its ideal form; and our sympathies are attracted by the sight of a process, belonging to our everyday experience, yet developed before us in all the force artistic setting can bestow.

Solution of the problem: the characters of the

But is this all? Does Shakespeare display before us the problem, yet give no help towards its solution? The key to the suitors' fates is not to be found in the trains of reasoning they go through. As if to warn us against looking for it in

choosers determine their fates.

this direction, Shakespeare contrives that we never hear the reasonings of the successful suitor. By a natural touch Portia, who has chosen Bassanio in her heart, is represented as unable to bear the suspense of hearing him deliberate, and calls for music to drown his meditations; it is only the conclusion to which he has come that we catch as the music closes. The particular song selected on this occasion points dimly in the direction in which we are to look for the true solution of the problem: iii. ii, from 43; esp. 61.

> Tell me where is fancy bred, iii. ii. 63.
> Or in the heart or in the head?

'Fancy' in Shakespearean English means 'love'; and the discussion, whether love belongs to the head or the heart, is no inappropriate accompaniment to a reality which consists in this—that the success in love of the suitors, which they are seeking to compass by their reasonings, is in fact being decided by their characters.

To compare the characters of the three suitors, it will be enough to note the different form that pride takes in each. The first suitor is a prince of a barbarian race, who has thus never known equals, but has been taught to consider himself half divine; as if made of different clay from the rest of mankind he instinctively shrinks from 'lead.' Yet modesty mingles with his pride, and though he feels truly that, so far as the estimation of him by others is concerned, he might rely upon 'desert,' yet he doubts if desert extends as far as Portia. What seizes his attention is the words, 'what many men desire'; and he rises to a flight of eloquence in picturing wildernesses and deserts become thoroughfares by the multitude of suitors flocking to Belmont. But he is all the while betraying a secret of which he was himself unconscious: he has been led to seek the hand of Portia, not by true love, but by the feeling that what all the world is seeking the Prince of Morocco must not be slow to claim. Very different is the pride of Arragon. He has no regal ii. i, vii. ii. vii. 20. ii. vii. 24–30. ii. vii, from 36. ii. ix.

CHAP. I. position, but rather appears to be one who has fallen in social rank; he makes up for such a fall by intense pride of family, and is one of those who complacently thank heaven that they are not as other men. The 'many men' which had attracted Morocco repels Arragon:

compare ii. ix. 47–9.

ii. ix. 31.

> I will not choose what many men desire,
> Because I will not jump with common spirits,
> And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.

ii. ix, from 36. He is caught by the bait of 'desert.' It is true he almost deceives us with the lofty tone in which he reflects how the world would benefit if dignities and offices were in all cases purchased by the merit of the wearer; yet there peeps through his sententiousness his real conception of merit—the sole merit of family descent. His ideal is that the 'true seed of honour' should be 'picked from the chaff and ruin of the times,' and wrest greatness from the 'low peasantry' who had risen to it. He accordingly rests his fate upon desert: and he finds in the casket of his choice a fool's head. Of Bassanio's soliloquy we hear enough to catch that his pride is the pride of the soldier, who will yield to none the post of danger, and how he is thus attracted by the 'threatening' of the leaden casket:

iii. ii, from 73. compare i. ii. 124.

> thou meagre lead,
> Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
> Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence.

Moreover, he is a lover, and the threatening is a challenge to show what he will risk for love: his true heart finds its natural satisfaction in 'giving and hazarding' his all. This is the pride that is worthy of Portia; and thus the ingenious puzzle of the 'inspired' father has succeeded in piercing through the outer defence of specious reasoning, and carrying its repulsion and attraction to the inmost characters of the suitors.

General principle: character as an element in judgment.

Such, then, is Shakespeare's treatment of the Problem of Judgment by Appearances: while he draws out the problem itself to its fullest extent in displaying the suitors elaborating

trains of argument for a momentous decision in which we see that reason can be of no avail, he suggests for the solution that, besides reason, there is in such judgments another element, character, and that in those crises in which reason is most fettered, character is most potent. An important solution this is; for what is character? A man's character is the shadow of his past life; it is the grand resultant of all the forces from within and from without that have been operating upon him since he became a conscious agent. Character is the sandy footprint of the commonplace hardened into the stone of habit; it is the complexity of daily tempers, judgments, restraints, impulses, all focussed into one master-passion acting with the rapidity of an instinct. To lay down then, that where reason fails as an element in judgment, character comes to its aid, is to bind together the exceptional and the ordinary in life. In most of the affairs of life men have scope for the exercise of commonplace qualities, but emergencies do come where this is denied them; in these cases, while they think, like the three suitors, that they are moving voluntarily in the direction in which they are judging fit at the moment, in reality the weight of their past lives is forcing them in the direction in which their judgment has been accustomed to take them. Thus in the moral, as in the physical world, nothing is ever lost: not a ripple on the surface of conduct but goes on widening to the outermost limit of experience. Shakespeare's contribution to the question of practical judgment is that by the long exercise of commonplace qualities we are building up a character which, though unconsciously, is the determining force in the emergencies in which commonplace qualities are impossible.

II.

How Shakespeare Manipulates the stories in Dramatising them.

A Study in Dramatic Workmanship.

CHAP. II.

Two points of Dramatic Mechanism.

IN treating Story as the raw material of the Romantic Drama it has already been shown, in the case of the stories utilised for *The Merchant of Venice*, what natural capacities these exhibit for dramatic effect. The next step is to show how the artist increases their force for dramatic purposes in the process of working them up. Two points will be illustrated in the present study: first, how Shakespeare meets the difficulties of a story and reduces them to a minimum; secondly, how he adds effectiveness to the two tales by weaving them together so that they assist one another's effect.

Reduction of difficulties specially important in Drama.

The avoidance or reduction of difficulties in a story is an obvious element in any kind of artistic handling; it is of special importance in Drama in proportion as we are more sensitive to improbabilities in what is supposed to take place before our eyes than in what we merely hear of by narrative. This branch of art could not be better illustrated than in the Story of the Jew: never perhaps has an artist had to deal with materials so bristling with difficulties of the greatest magnitude, and never, it may be added, have they been met with greater ingenuity. The host of improbabilities gathering about such a detail as the pound of flesh must strike every mind. There is, however, preliminary to these, another difficulty of more general application: the difficulty of painting a character bad enough to be the hero of the

First difficulty: monstrosity of the

story. It might be thought that to paint excess of badness is comparatively easy, as needing but a coarse brush. On the contrary, there are few severer tests of creative power than the treatment of monstrosity. To be told that there is villainy in the world and tacitly to accept the statement may be easy; it is another thing to be brought into close contact with the villains, to hear them converse, to watch their actions and occasionally to be taken into their confidence. We realise in Drama through our sympathy and our experience: in real life we have not been accustomed to come across monsters and are unfamiliar with their behaviour; in proportion then as the badness of a character is exaggerated it is carried outside the sphere of our experience, the naturalness of the scene is interrupted and its human interest tends to decline. So, in the case of the story under consideration, the dramatist is confronted with this dilemma: he must make the character of Shylock absolutely bad, or the incident of the bond will appear unreal; he must not make the character extraordinarily bad, or there is danger of the whole scene appearing unreal.

Jew's character.

Shakespeare meets a difficulty of this kind by a double treatment. On the one hand, he puts no limits to the blackness of the character itself; on the other hand, he provides against repulsiveness by giving it a special attraction of another kind. In the present case, while painting Shylock as a monster, he secures for him a hold upon our sympathy by representing him as a victim of intolerable ill-treatment and injustice. The effect resembles the popular sympathy with criminals. The men themselves and their crimes are highly repulsive; but if some slight irregularity occurs in the process of bringing them to justice—if a counsel shows himself unduly eager, or a judge appears for a moment one-sided, a host of volunteer advocates espouse their cause. These are actuated no doubt by sensitiveness to purity of justice; but their protests have a ring that closely resembles

Its repulsiveness counteracted by sympathy with his wrongs.

CHAP. II.

sympathy with the criminals themselves, whom they not unfrequently end by believing to be innocent and injured. In the same way Shakespeare shows no moderation in the touches of bloodthirstiness, of brutality, of sordid meanness he heaps together in the character of Shylock; but he takes equal pains to rouse our indignation at the treatment he is made to suffer. Personages such as Gratiano, Salanio, Salarino, Tubal, serve to keep before us the mediæval feud between Jew and Gentile, and the persecuting insolence with which the fashionable youth met the money-lenders who ministered to their necessities. Antonio himself has stepped out of his natural character in the grossness of his insults to his enemy. Shylock has been injured in pocket as well as in sentiment, Antonio using his wealth to disturb the money-market, and defeat the schemes of the Jew; according to Shylock Antonio has hindered him of half-a-million, and were he out of Venice the usurer could make what merchandise he would. Finally, our sense of deliverance in the Trial Scene cannot hinder a touch of compunction for the crushed plaintiff, as he appeals against the hard justice meted out to him:—the loss of his property, the acceptance of his life as an act of grace, the abandonment of his religion and race, which implies the abandonment of the profession by which he makes his living.

e.g. in iii. i, iii; iv. i; ii. v.

e.g. iii. i; iv. i, &c.

i. iii. 107–138.

iii. i. 57, 133; iii. iii. 22; and i. iii. 45.

iv. i. 374.

> Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
> You take my house when you do take the prop
> That doth sustain my house; you take my life
> When you do take the means whereby I live.

Dramatic Hedging.

By thus making us resent the harsh fate dealt to Shylock the dramatist recovers in our minds the fellow-feeling we have lost in contemplating the Jew himself. A name for such double treatment might be 'Dramatic Hedging': as the better covers a possible loss by a second bet on the opposite side, so, when the necessities of a story involve the creation of a monster, the dramatic artist 'hedges' against loss of attrac-

tiveness by finding for the character human interest in some other direction. So successful has Shakespeare been in the present instance that a respectable minority of readers rise from the play partisans of Shylock. CHAP. II.

We pass on to the crop of difficulties besetting the pound of flesh as a detail in the bond. That such a bond should be proposed, that when proposed it should be accepted, that it should be seriously entertained by a court of justice, that if entertained at all it should be upset on so frivolous a pretext as the omission of reference to the shedding of blood: these form a series of impossible circumstances that any dramatist might despair of presenting with even an approach to naturalness. Yet if we follow the course of the story as moulded by Shakespeare we shall find all these impossibilities one after another evaded. *Difficulties connected with the pound of flesh.*

At the end of the first scene Antonio had bidden Bassanio go forth and try what his credit could do in Venice. Armed with this blank commission Bassanio hurries into the city. As a gay young nobleman he knows nothing of the commercial world except the money-lenders; and now proceeds to the best-known of them, apparently unaware of what any gossip on the Rialto could have told him, the unfortunate relations between this Shylock and his friend Antonio. At the opening of the Bond Scene we find Bassanio and Shylock in conversation, Bassanio impatient and irritated to find that the famous security he has to offer seems to make so little impression on the usurer. At this juncture Antonio himself falls[1] in with them, sees at a glance to what his rash friend *Proposal of the bond.* i. i. 179. compare i. iii. 1–40. i. iii. 41.

[1] No commentator has succeeded in making intelligible the line

How like a fawning publican he looks! i. iii. 42.

as it stands in the text at the opening of Shylock's soliloquy. The expression 'fawning publican' is so totally the opposite of all the qualities of Antonio that it could have no force even in the mouth of a satirist. It is impossible not to be attracted by the simple change in the text that would not only get over this difficulty, but add a new effect to the scene: the change of assigning this single line to Antonio,

CHAP. II. has committed him, but is too proud to draw back in sight of his enemy. Already a minor difficulty is surmounted, as to how Antonio comes to be in the position of asking an obligation of Shylock. Antonio is as impatient as dignity will permit to bring an awkward business to a conclusion. Shylock, on the contrary, to whom the interview itself is a triumph, in which his persecutor is appearing before him in the position of a client, casts about to prolong the conversation to as great a length as possible. Any topic would serve his purpose; but what topic more natural than the question at the root of the feud between the two, the question of lending money on interest? It is here we reach the very heart of our problem, how the first mention of the pound of flesh is made without a shock of unreality sufficient to ruin the whole scene. Had Shylock asked for a forfeiture of a million per cent., or in any other way thrown into a commercial form his purpose of ruining Antonio, the old feud and the present opportunity would be explanation sufficient: the real difficulty is the total incongruity between such an idea as a pound of human flesh and commercial transactions of any kind. This difficulty Shakespeare has met by one of his greatest triumphs of mechanical ingenuity; his leading

The proposal led up to by the

reserving, of course, the rest of the speech for Shylock. The passage would then read thus [the stage direction is my own]:

Enter ANTONIO.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.
Ant. [*Aside*]. How like a fawning publican he looks—
[BASSANIO *whispers* ANTONIO *and brings him to* SHYLOCK.
Shy. [*Aside*]. I hate him, for he is a Christian,
But more, &c.

Both the terms 'fawning' and 'publican' are literally applicable to Shylock, and are just what Antonio would be likely to say of him. It is again a natural effect for the two foes on meeting for the first time in the play to exchange scowling defiance. Antonio's defiance is cut short at the first line by Bassanio's running up to him, explaining what he has done, and bringing Antonio up to where Shylock is standing; the time occupied in doing this gives Shylock scope for his longer soliloquy.

discourse on interest. i. iii, from 69.

up to the proposal of the bond by the discussion on interest. The effect of this device a modern reader is in danger of losing: we are so familiar with the idea of interest at the present day that we are apt to forget what the difficulty was to the ancient and mediæval mind, which for so many generations kept the practice of taking interest outside the pale of social decency. This prejudice was one of the confusions arising out of the use of a metal currency. The ancient mind could understand how corn put into the ground would by the agency of time alone produce twentyfold, thirtyfold, or a hundredfold; they could understand how cattle left to themselves would without human assistance increase from a small to a large flock: but how could metal grow? how could lifeless gold and silver increase and multiply like animals and human beings? The Greek word for interest, *tokos*, is the exact equivalent of the English word *breed*, and the idea underlying the two was regularly connected with that of interest in ancient discussions. The same idea is present throughout the dispute between Antonio and Shylock. Antonio indignantly asks:

> when did friendship take
> A *breed* for *barren metal* of his friend?

i. iii. 134.

Shylock illustrates usury by citing the patriarch Jacob and his clever trick in cattle-breeding; showing how, at a time when cattle were the currency, the natural rate of increase might be diverted to private advantage. Antonio interrupts him:

i. iii. 72

> Is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

i. iii. 96.

Shylock answers:

> I cannot tell; I make it *breed* as fast;

both parties thus showing that they considered the distinction between the using of flesh and metal for the medium of wealth to be the essential point in their dispute. With this notion then of flesh *versus* money floating in the air between them the interview goes on to the outbursts of mutual hatred which reach a climax in Antonio's challenge to Shylock to do

CHAP. II.

i. iii, from 138.

his worst; this challenge suddenly combines with the root idea of the conversation to flash into Shylock's mind the suggestion of the bond. In an instant he smoothes his face and proposes friendship. He will lend the money without interest, in pure kindness, nay more, he will go to that extent of good understanding implied in joking, and will have a merry bond; while as to the particular joke (he says in effect), since you Christians cannot understand interest in the case of money while you acknowledge it in the case of flesh and blood, suppose I take as my interest in this bond a pound of your own flesh. In such a context the monstrous proposal sounds almost natural. It has further been ushered in in a manner which makes it almost impossible to decline it. When one who is manifestly an injured man is the first to make advances, a generous adversary finds it almost impossible to hold back. A sensitive man, again, will shrink from nothing more than from the ridicule attaching to those who take serious precautions against a jest. And the more incongruous Shylock's proposal is with commercial negotiations the better evidence it is of his non-commercial intentions. In a word, the essence of the difficulty was the incongruity between human flesh and money transactions: it has been surmounted by a discussion, flowing naturally from the position of the two parties, of which the point is the relative position of flesh and money as the medium of wealth in the past.

Difficulty of legally recognising the bond evaded:

The bond thus proposed and accepted, there follows the difficulty of representing it as entertained by a court of justice. With reference to Shakespeare's handling of this point it may be noted, first, that he leaves us in doubt

iv. i. 104.

whether the court would have entertained it: the Duke is intimating an intention of adjourning at the moment when the entrance of Portia gives a new turn to the proceedings.

iv. i. 17.

Again, at the opening of the trial, the Duke gives expression to the universal opinion that Shylock's conduct was intelligible only on the supposition that he was keeping up to the

last moment the appearance of insisting on his strange terms, in order that before the eyes of the whole city he might exhibit his enemy at his mercy, and then add to his ignominy by publicly pardoning him: a fate which, it must be admitted, was no more than Antonio justly deserved. This will explain how Shylock comes to have a hearing at all: when once he is admitted to speak it is exceedingly difficult to resist the pleas Shakespeare puts into his mouth. He takes his stand on the city's charter and the letter of the law, and declines to be drawn into any discussion of natural justice; yet even as a question of natural justice what answer can be found when he casually points to the institution of slavery, which we must suppose to have existed in Venice at the period? Shylock's only offence is his seeking to make Antonio's life a matter of barter: what else is the accepted institution of slavery but the establishment of power over human flesh and blood and life, simply because these have been bought with money, precisely as Shylock has given good ducats for his rights over the flesh of Antonio? No wonder the perplexed Duke is for adjourning.

Iv. i. 38.

Iv. i. 90.

There remains one more difficulty, the mode in which, according to the traditional story, the bond is upset. It is manifest that the agreement as to the pound of flesh, if it is to be recognised by a court of justice at all, cannot without the grossest perversion of justice be cancelled on the ground of its omitting to mention blood. Legal evasion can go to great lengths. It is well known that an Act requiring cabs to carry lamps at night has been evaded through the omission of a direction that the lamps were to be lighted; and that importers have escaped a duty on foreign gloves at so much the pair by bringing the right-hand and left-hand gloves over in different ships. But it is perfectly possible to carry lamps without lighting them, while it is a clear impossibility to cut human flesh without shedding blood. Nothing of course would be easier than to upset the bond on rational

Difficulty as to the traditional mode of upsetting the bond met.

CHAP. II. grounds—indeed the difficulty is rather to imagine it receiving rational consideration at all; but on the other hand no solution of the perplexity could be half so dramatic as the one tradition has preserved. The dramatist has to choose between a course of procedure which shall be highly dramatic but leave a sense of injustice, and one that shall be sound and legal but comparatively tame. Shakespeare contrives to secure both alternatives. He retains the traditional plea as to the blood, but puts it into the mouth of one known to his audience to be a woman playing the lawyer for the nonce; iv. i. 314, and again, before we have time to recover from our surprise 347. and feel the injustice of the proceeding, he follows up the brilliant evasion by a sound legal plea, the suggestion of a real lawyer. Portia has come to the court from a conference with her cousin Bellario, the most learned jurist of Venice. iii. iv. 47; iv. i. 143. Certainly it was not this doctor who hit upon the idea of the blood being omitted. His contribution to the interesting consultation was clearly the old statute of Venice, which every one else seems to have forgotten, which made the mere attempt on the life of a citizen by an alien punishable with death and loss of property: according to this piece of statute law not only would Shylock's bond be illegal, but the demand of such security constituted a capital offence. Thus Shakespeare surmounts the final difficulty in the story of the Jew in a mode which retains dramatic force to the full, yet does this without any violation of legal fairness.

The interweaving of the two stories.

The second purpose of the present study is to show how Shakespeare has added to the effectiveness of his two stories by so weaving them together that they assist one another's effect.

First, it is easy to see how the whole movement of the play rises naturally out of the union of the two stories. One of the main distinctions between the progress of events in real life or history and in Drama is that the movement of a drama falls into the form technically known as Complication

Complication and Resolution.

and Resolution. A dramatist fastens our attention upon some train of events: then he sets himself to divert this train of events from its natural course by some interruption; this interruption is either removed, and the train of events returns to its natural course, or the interruption is carried on to some tragic culmination. In *The Merchant of Venice* our interest is at the beginning fixed on Antònio as rich, high-placed, the protector and benefactor of his friends. By the events following upon the incident of the bond we see what would seem the natural life of Antonio diverted into a totally different channel; in the end the whole course is restored, and Antonio becomes prosperous as before. Such interruption of a train of incidents is its Complication, and the term Complication suggests a happy Resolution to follow. Complication and Resolution are essential to dramatic movement, as discords and their 'resolution' into concords constitute the essence of music. The Complication and Resolution in the story of the Jew serve for the Complication and Resolution of the drama as a whole; and my immediate point is that these elements of movement in the one story spring directly out of its connection with the other. But for Bassanio's need of money and his blunder in applying to Shylock the bond would never have been entered into, and the change in Antonio's fortunes would never have come about: thus the cause for all the Complication of the play (technically, the Complicating Force) is the happy lover of the Caskets Story. Similarly Portia is the means by which Antonio's fortunes are restored to their natural flow: in other words, the source of the Resolution (or Resolving Force) is the maiden of the Caskets Story. The two leading personages of the one tale are the sources respectively of the Complication and Resolution in the other tale, which carry the Complication and Resolution of the drama as a whole. Thus simply does the movement of the whole play flow from the union of the two stories.

The one story complicated and resolved by the other. I. i, from 122; I. iii.

One consequence flowing from this is worth noting; that *The whole*

CHAP. II.

play symmetrical about its central scene.

the scene in which Bassanio makes his successful choice of the casket is the Dramatic Centre of the whole play, as being the point at which the Complicating and Resolving Forces meet. This Dramatic Centre is, according to Shakespeare's favourite custom, placed in the exact mechanical centre of the drama, covering the middle of the middle Act. There is again an amount of poetic splendour lavished upon this scene which throws it up as a poetic centre to the whole. More than this, it is the real crisis of the play. Looking philosophically upon the whole drama as a piece of history, we must admit that the true turning-point is the success of Bassanio; the apparent crisis is the Trial Scene, but this is in reality governed by the scene of the successful choice, and if Portia and Bassanio had not been united in the earlier scene no lawyer would have interposed to turn the current of events in the trial. There is yet another sense in which the same scene may be called central. Hitherto I have dealt with only two tales; the full plot however of *The Merchant of Venice* involves two more, the Story of Jessica and the Episode of the Rings: it is to be observed that all four stories meet in the scene of the successful choice. This scene is the climax of the Caskets Story. It is connected with the catastrophe in the Story of the Jew: Bassanio, at the moment of his happiness, learns that the friend through whom he has been able to contend for the prize has forfeited his life to his foe as the price of his liberality. The scene is connected with the Jessica Story: for Jessica and her husband are the messengers who bring the sad tidings, and thus link together the bright and gloomy elements of the play. Finally, the Episode of the Rings, which is to occupy the end of the drama, has its foundation in this scene, in the exchange of the rings which are destined to be the source of such ironical perplexity. Such is the symmetry with which the plot of *The Merchant of Venice* has been constructed: the incident which is technically its Dramatic Centre is at once its mechanical

iii. ii, from 221.

iii. ii. 173–187.

centre, its poetic centre, and, philosophically considered, its true turning-point; while, considering the play as a Romantic drama with its union of stories, we find in the same central incident all the four stories dovetailed together. CHAP. II.

Shakespeare as a master of Plot.

These points may appear small and merely technical. But it is a constant purpose with me in the present exposition of Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist to combat the notion, so widely prevalent amongst ordinary readers, that Shakespeare, though endowed with the profoundest grasp of human nature, is yet careless in the construction of his plots: a notion in itself as improbable as it would be that a sculptor could be found to produce individual figures exquisitely moulded and chiselled, yet awkwardly and clumsily grouped. It is the minuter points that show the finish of an artist; and such symmetry of construction as appears in *The Merchant of Venice* is not likely to characterise a dramatist who sacrifices plot to character-painting.

The union of a light with a serious story.

There remains another point, which no one will consider small or technical, connected with the union of the two stories: the fact that Shakespeare has thus united a light and a serious story, that he has woven together gloom and brightness. This carries us to one of the great battlefields of dramatic history; no feature is more characteristic of the Romantic Drama than this mingling of light and serious in the same play, and at no point has it been more stoutly assailed by critics trained in an opposite school. I say nothing of the wider scope this practice gives to the dramatist, nor the way in which it brings the world of art nearer to the world of reality; my present purpose is to review the dramatic effects which flow from the mingling of the two elements in the present play.

Dramatic effects arising out of this union.

In general human interest the stories are a counterpoise to one another, so different in kind, so equal in the degree of interest their progress continues to call forth. The incidents of the two tales gather around Antonio and Portia

CHAP. II.

Effects of Human Interest.

respectively; each of these is a full and rounded character, and they are both centres of their respective worlds. The stories seem to start from a common point. The keynote to the story of the Jew is the strange 'sadness'—the word implies no more than seriousness—which overpowers Antonio, and which seems to be the shadow of his coming trouble. Compare with this the first words we hear of Portia:

i. i. 1.

i. ii. 1. **By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.**

Such a humorous languor is a fitting precursor to the excitement and energy of the scenes which follow. But from this common starting-point the stories move in opposite directions; the spectator's sympathies are demanded alternately for two independent chains of circumstances, for the fortunes of Antonio sinking lower and lower, and the fortunes of Portia rising higher and higher. He sees the merchant and citizen become a bankrupt prisoner, the lordly benefactor of his friends a wretch at the mercy of his foe. He sees Portia, already endowed with beauty, wealth, and character, attain what to her heart is yet higher, the power to lay all she has at the feet of the man she loves. Then, when they are at the climax of their happiness and misery, when Portia has received all that this world can bestow, and Antonio has lost all that this world can take away, for the first time these two central personages meet face to face in the Trial Scene. And if from general human interest we pass on to the machinery of plot, we find this also governed by the same combination: a half-serious frolic is the medium in which a tragic crisis finds its solution.

Effects of Plot.

Emotional effects: increase of tragic passion;

But it is of course passion and emotional interest which are mainly affected by the union of light and serious: these we shall appreciate chiefly in connection with the Trial Scene, where the emotional threads of the play are gathered into a knot, and the two personages who are the embodiments of the light and serious elements face one another as judge and

prisoner. In this scene it is remarkable how Portia takes pains to prolong to the utmost extent the crisis she has come to solve; she holds in her fingers the threads of the tangled situation, and she is strong enough to play with it before she will consent to bring it to an end. She has intimated her opinion that the letter of the bond must be maintained, she has made her appeal to Shylock for mercy and been refused, she has heard Bassanio's appeal to wrest the law for once to her authority and has rejected it; there remains nothing but to pronounce the decree. But at the last moment she asks to see the bond, and every spectator in court holds his breath and hears his heart beat as he follows the lawyer's eye down line after line. It is of no avail; at the end she can only repeat the useless offer of thrice the loan, with the effect of drawing from Shylock an oath that he will not give way. Then Portia admits that the bond is forfeit, with a needless reiteration of its horrible details; yet, as if it were some evenly balanced question, in which after-thoughts were important, she once more appeals to Shylock to be merciful and bid her tear the bond, and evokes a still stronger asseveration from the malignant victor, until even Antonio's stoicism begins to give way, and he begs for a speedy judgment. Portia then commences to pass her judgment in language of legal prolixity, which sounds like a recollection of her hour with Bellario:

iv. i, from 225.
178.
184–207.
214–222.
225.
227–230.
230–244.
243.

> For the intent and purpose of the law
> Hath full relation to the penalty,
> Which here appeareth due upon the bond, &c.

Next she fads about the details of the judicial barbarity, the balance to weigh the flesh, a surgeon as a forlorn hope; and when Shylock demurs to the last, stops to argue that he might do this for charity. At last surely the intolerable suspense will come to a termination. But our lawyer of half-an-hour's standing suddenly remembers she has forgotten to call on the defendant in the suit, and the pathos is

255–261.
263.

CHAP. II. intensified by the dying speech of Antonio, calmly welcoming death for himself, anxious only to soften Bassanio's remorse, his last human passion a rivalry with Portia for the love of his friend.

iv. i. 276. Bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.

iv. i, from 299. When the final judgment can be delayed no longer its opening sentences are still lengthened out by the jingling repetitions of judicial formality,

The law allows it, and the court awards it, &c.

Only when every evasion has been exhausted comes the thunderstroke which reverses the whole situation. Now it is clear that had this situation been intended to have a tragic termination this prolonging of its details would have been impossible; thus to harrow our feelings with items of agony would be not art but barbarity. It is because Portia knows what termination she is going to give to the scene that she can indulge in such boldness; it is because the audience have recognised in Portia the signal of deliverance that the lengthening of the crisis becomes the dramatic beauty of suspense. It appears then that, if this scene be regarded only as a crisis of tragic passion, the dramatist has been able to extract more *tragic* effect out of it by the device of assisting the tragic with a light story.

reaction and comic effect;

Again, it is a natural law of the human mind to pass from strain to reaction, and suspense relieved will find vent in vehement exhilaration. By giving Portia her position in the crisis scene the dramatist is clearly furnishing the means for a reaction to follow, and the reaction is found in the Episode of the Rings, by which the disguised wives entangle their husbands in a perplexity affording the audience the bursts of merriment needed as relief from the tension of the Trial Scene. The play is thus brought into conformity with the laws of mental working, and the effect of the reaction

iv. i, from 425.

is to make the serious passion more keen because more healthy.

effects of mixed passion.

Finally, there are the effects of mixed passion, neither wholly serious nor wholly light, but compounded of the two, which are impossible to a drama that can admit only a single tone. The effect of Dramatic Irony, which Shakespeare inherited from the ancient Drama, but greatly modified and extended, is powerfully illustrated at the most pathetic point of the Trial Scene, when Antonio's chance reference to Bassanio's new wife calls from Bassanio and his follower agonised vows to sacrifice even their wives if this could save their patron—little thinking that these wives are standing by to record the vow. But there is an effect higher than this. Portia's outburst on the theme of mercy, considered only as a speech, is one of the noblest in literature, a gem of purest truth in a setting of richest music. But the situation in which she speaks it is so framed as to make Portia herself the embodiment of the mercy she describes. How can we imagine a higher type of mercy, the feminine counterpart of justice, than in the bright woman, at the moment of her supreme happiness, appearing in the garb of the law to deliver a righteous unfortunate from his one error, and the justice of Venice from the insoluble perplexity of having to commit a murder by legal process? And how is this situation brought about but by the most intricate interweaving of a story of brightness with a story of trouble?

Iv. i. 273–294.

Iv. i. 184–202.

In all branches then of dramatic effect, in Character, in Plot and in Passion, the union of a light with a serious story is found to be a source of power and beauty. The fault charged against the Romantic Drama has upon a deeper view proved a new point of departure in dramatic progress; and by such combination of opposites the two tales have increased the sum of their individual effectiveness by the added effect of their union in a drama.

III.

How Shakespeare makes his plot more Complex in order to make it more Simple.

A Study in Underplot.

CHAP. III.

Paradox of simplicity by means of increased complexity.

THE title of the present study is a paradox: that Shakespeare makes a plot more complex[1] in order to make it more simple. It is however a paradox that finds an illustration from the material world in every open roof. The architect's problem has been to support a heavy weight without the assistance of pillars, and it might have been expected that in solving the problem he would at least have tried every means in his power for diminishing the weight to be supported. On the contrary, he has increased this weight by the addition of massive cross-beams and heavy iron-girders. Yet, if these have been arranged according to the laws of construction, each of them will bring a supporting power considerably greater than its own weight; and thus, while in a literal sense increasing the roof, for all practical purposes they may be said to have diminished it. Similarly a dramatist of the Romantic school, from his practice of uniting more than one story in the same plot, has to face the

[1] It is a difficulty of literary criticism that it has to use as technical terms words belonging to ordinary conversation, and therefore more or less indefinite in their significations. In the present work I am making a distinction between 'complex' and 'complicated': the latter is applied to the diverting a story out of its natural course with a view to its ultimate 'resolution'; 'complex' is reserved for the interweaving of stories with one another. Later on 'single' will be opposed to 'complex,' and 'simple' to 'complicated.'

difficulty of complexity. This difficulty he solves not by seeking how to reduce combinations as far as possible, but, on the contrary, by the addition of more and inferior stories; yet if these new stories are so handled as to emphasise and heighten the effect of the main stories, the additional complexity will have resulted in increased simplicity. In the play at present under consideration, Shakespeare has interwoven into a common pattern two famous and striking tales; his plot, already elaborate, he has made yet more elaborate by the addition of two more tales less striking in their character—the story of Jessica and the Episode of the Rings. If it can be shown that these inferior stories have the effect of assisting the main stories, smoothing away their difficulties and making their prominent points yet more prominent, it will be clear that he has made his plot more complex only in reality to make it more simple. The present study is devoted to noticing how the Stories of Jessica and of the Rings minister to the effects of the Story of the Jew and the Caskets Story.

The Jessica Story and the Rings Episode assist the main stories.

To begin with: it may be seen that in many ways the mechanical working out of the main stories is assisted by the Jessica Story. In the first place it relieves them of their superfluous personages. Every drama, however simple, must contain 'mechanical' personages, who are introduced into the play, not for their own sake, but to assist in presenting incidents or other personages. The tendency of Romantic Drama to put a story as a whole upon the stage multiplies the number of such mechanical personages: and when several such stories come to be combined in one, there is a danger of the stage being crowded with characters which intrinsically have little interest. Here the Underplots become of service and find occupation for these inferior personages. In the present case only four personages are essential to the main plot—Antonio, Shylock, Bassanio, Portia. But in bringing out the unusual tie that binds together

The Jessica Story. It serves as Underplot for mechanical personages.

CHAP. III.

a representative of the city and a representative of the nobility, and upon which so much of the plot rests, it is an assistance to introduce the rank and file of gay society and depict these paying court to the commercial magnate. The high position of Antonio and Bassanio in their respective spheres will come out still clearer if these lesser social personages are graduated. Salanio, Salerio, and Salarino are mere parasites; Gratiano has a certain amount of individuality in his wit; while, seeing that Bassanio is a scholar as well as a nobleman and soldier, it is fitting to give prominence amongst his followers to the intellectual and artistic Lorenzo. Similarly the introduction of Nerissa assists in presenting Portia fully; Shylock is seen in his relations with his race by the aid of Tubal, his family life is seen in connection with Jessica, and his behaviour to dependants in connection with Launcelot; Launcelot himself is set off by Gobbo. Now the Jessica Story is mainly devoted to these inferior personages, and the majority of them take an animated part in the successful elopement. It is further to be noted that the Jessica Underplot has itself an inferior story attached to it, that of Launcelot, who seeks scope for his good nature by transferring himself to a Christian master, just as his mistress seeks a freer social atmosphere in union with a Christian husband. And, similarly, side by side with the Caskets Story, which unites Portia and Bassanio, we have a faintly-marked underplot which unites their followers, Nerissa and Gratiano. In one or other of these inferior stories the mechanical personages find attachment to plot; and the multiplication of individual figures, instead of leaving an impression of waste, is made to minister to the sense of Dramatic Economy.

e.g. i. i; iii. iii; iv. i.

i. i; compare iii. i, esp. 14–18.

i. i. 74–118.

i. ii. 124.

v. i, &c.

i. ii, &c.

iii. i. 80, &c.

ii. ii, iii; iii. v.

iii. ii. 188, &c.

It assists mechanical development: occupying the three

Again: as there are mechanical personages so there are mechanical difficulties—difficulties of realisation which do not belong to the essence of a story, but which appear when the story comes to be worked out upon the stage. The Story of

CHAP. III.

the Jew involves such a mechanical difficulty in the interval of three months which elapses between the signing of the bond and its forfeiture. In a classical setting this would be avoided by making the play begin on the day the bond falls due; such treatment, however, would shut out the great dramatic opportunity of the Bond Scene. The Romantic Drama always inclines to exhibiting the whole of a story; it must therefore in the present case *suppose* a considerable interval between one part of the story and another, and such suppositions tend to be weaknesses. The Jessica Story conveniently bridges over this interval. The first Act is given up to bringing about the bond, which at the beginning of the third Act appears to be broken. The intervening Act consists of no less than nine scenes, and while three of them carry on the progress of the Caskets Story, the other six are devoted to the elopement of Jessica: the bustle and activity implied in such rapid change of scene indicating how an underplot can be used to keep the attention of the audience just where the natural interest of the main story would flag.

months' interval,

The same use of the Jessica Story to bridge over the three months' interval obviates another mechanical difficulty of the main plot. The loss of all Antonio's ships, the supposition that all the commercial ventures of so prudent a merchant should simultaneously miscarry, is so contrary to the chances of things as to put some strain upon our sense of probability; and this is just one of the details which, too unimportant to strike us in an anecdote, become realised when a story is presented before our eyes. The artist, it must be observed, is not bound to find actual solutions for every possible difficulty; he has merely to see that they do not interfere with dramatic effect. Sometimes he so arranges his incidents that the difficulty is met and vanishes; sometimes it is kept out of sight, the portion of the story which contains it going on behind the scenes; at other times he is content with reducing the difficulty in amount. In the

and so breaking gradually the news of Antonio's losses.

CHAP. III.

present instance the improbability of Antonio's losses is lessened by the gradual way in which the news is broken to us, distributed amongst the numerous scenes of the three months'

ii. viii. 25. interval. We get the first hint of it in a chance conversation between Salanio and Salarino, in which they are chuckling over the success of the elopement and the fury of the robbed father. Salanio remarks that Antonio must look that he keep his day; this reminds Salarino of a ship he has just heard of as lost somewhere in the English Channel:

> I thought upon Antonio when he told me;
> And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

iii. i. In the next scene but one the same personages meet, and one of them, enquiring for the latest news, is told that the rumour yet lives of Antonio's loss, and now the exact place of the wreck is specified as the Goodwin Sands; Salarino adds: 'I would it might prove the end of his losses.' Before the close of the scene Shylock and Tubal have been added to it. Tubal has come from Genoa and gives Shylock the welcome news that at Genoa it was *known* that Antonio had lost an argosy coming from Tripolis; while on his journey to Venice Tubal had travelled with creditors of Antonio who were speculating upon his bankruptcy as a

iii. ii. certainty. Then comes the central scene in which the full news reaches Bassanio at the moment of his happiness: all Antonio's ventures failed—

> From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,
> From Lisbon, Barbary, and India,

iii. iii. not one escaped. In the following scene we see Antonio in custody.

The Jessica Story assists Dramatic Hedging in regard to Shylock.

These are minor points such as may be met with in any play, and the treatment of them belongs to ordinary Dramatic Mechanism. But we have already had to notice that the Story of the Jew contains special difficulties which belong to the essence of the story, and must be met by special

devices. One of these was the monstrous character of the Jew himself; and we saw how the dramatist was obliged to maintain in the spectators a double attitude to Shylock, alternately letting them be repelled by his malignity and again attracting their sympathy to him as a victim of wrong. Nothing in the play assists this double attitude so much as the Jessica Story. Not to speak of the fact that Shylock shows no appreciation for the winsomeness of the girl who attracts every one else in the drama, nor of the way in which this one point of brightness in the Jewish quarter throws up the sordidness of all her surroundings, we hear the Jew's own daughter reflect that his house is a 'hell,' and we see enough of his domestic life to agree with her. A Shylock painted without a tender side at all would be repulsive; he becomes much more repulsive when he shows a tenderness for one human being, and yet it appears how this tenderness has grown hard and rotten with the general debasement of his soul by avarice, until, in his ravings over his loss, his ducats and his daughter are ranked as equally dear.

II. iii. 2.

e.g. II. v.

III. i, from 25.

> I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! Would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! — III. i. 92.

For all this we feel that he is hardly used in losing her. Paternal feeling may take a gross form, but it is paternal feeling none the less, and cannot be denied our sympathy; bereavement is a common ground upon which not only high and low, but even the pure and the outcast, are drawn together. Thus Jessica at home makes us hate Shylock; with Jessica lost we cannot help pitying him. The perfection of Dramatic Hedging lies in the equal balancing of the conflicting feelings, and one of the most powerful scenes in the whole play is devoted to this twofold display of Shylock. Fresh from the incident of the elopement, he is encountered by the parasites and by Tubal: these amuse themselves with alternately 'chaffing' him upon his losses,

CHAP. III.

and 'drawing' him in the matter of the expected gratification of his vengeance, while his passions rock him between extremes of despair and fiendish anticipation. We may go further. Great creative power is accompanied by great attachment to the creations and keen sense of justice in disposing of them. Looked at as a whole, the Jessica Story is Shakespeare's compensation to Shylock. The sentence on Shylock, which the necessities of the story require, is legal rather than just; yet large part of it consists in a requirement that he shall make his daughter an heiress. And, to put it more generally, the repellent character and hard fate of the father have set against them the sweetness and beauty of the daughter, together with the full cup of good fortune which her wilful rebellion brings her in the love of Lorenzo and the protecting friendship of Portia. Perhaps the dramatist, according to his wont, is warning us of this compensating treatment when he makes one of the characters early in the play exclaim:

Jessica Shakespeare's compensation to Shylock.

iv. i. 348–394.

ii. iv. 34.

> If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
> It will be for his gentle daughter's sake.

The Jessica Story explains Shylock's unyieldingness.

The other main source of difficulty in the Story of the Jew is, as we have seen, the detail concerning the pound of flesh, which throws improbability over every stage of its progress. In one at least of these stages the difficulty is directly met by the aid of the Jessica Story: it is this which explains Shylock's resolution not to give way. When we try in imagination to realise the whole circumstances, common sense must take the view taken in the play itself by the Duke:

iv. i. 17.

> Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
> That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
> To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
> Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
> Than is thy strange apparent cruelty.

A life-long training in avarice would not easily resist an offer of nine thousand ducats. But further, the alternatives between which Shylock has to choose are not so simple as

the alternatives of Antonio's money or his life. On the one hand, Shylock has to consider the small chance that either the law or the mob would actually suffer the atrocity to be judicially perpetrated, and how his own life would be likely to be lost in the attempt. Again, turning to the other alternative, Shylock is certainly deep in his schemes of vengeance, and the finesse of malignity must have suggested to him how much more cruel to a man of Antonio's stamp it would be to fling him a contemptuous pardon before the eyes of Venice than to turn him into a martyr, even supposing this to be permitted. But at the moment when the choice becomes open to Shylock he has been maddened by the loss of his daughter, who, with the wealth she has stolen, has gone to swell the party of his deadly foe. It is fury, not calculating cruelty, that makes Shylock with a madman's tenacity cling to the idea of blood, while this passion is blinding him to a more keenly flavoured revenge, and risking the chance of securing any vengeance at all[1].

CHAP. III.

The Jessica Story assists the interweaving of the main stories.

From the mechanical development of the main plot and the reduction of its difficulties, we pass to the interweaving of the two principal stories, which is so leading a feature of the play. In the main this interweaving is sufficiently provided for by the stories themselves, and we have already seen how the leading personages in the one story are the source of the whole movement in the other story. But this interweaving is drawn closer still by the affair of Jessica: technically described the position in the plot of Jessica's elopement is that of a Link Action between the main stories. This

It is thus a Link Action,

[1] This seems to me a reasonable view notwithstanding what Jessica says to the contrary (iii. ii. 286), that she has often heard her father swear he would rather have Antonio's flesh than twenty times the value of the bond. It is one thing to swear vengeance in private, another thing to follow it up in the face of a world in opposition. A man of overbearing temper surrounded by inferiors and dependants often utters threats, and seems to find a pleasure in uttering them, which both he and his hearers know he will never carry out.

CHAP. III.

linking appears in the way in which Jessica and her suite are in the course of the drama transferred from the one tale to the other. At the opening of the play they are personages in the Story of the Jew, and represent its two antagonistic sides, Jessica being the daughter of the Jew and Lorenzo a friend and follower of Bassanio and Antonio. First the contrivance of the elopement assists in drawing together these opposite sides of the Jew Story, and aggravating the feud on which it turns. Then, as we have seen, Jessica and her husband in the central scene of the whole play come into contact with the Caskets Story at its climax. From this point they become adopted into the Caskets Story, and settle down in the house and under the protection of Portia. This transference further assists the symmetry of interweaving by helping to adjust the balance between the two main stories. In its *mass*, if the expression may be allowed, the Caskets tale, with its steady progress to a goal of success, is overweighted by the tale of Antonio's tragic peril and startling deliverance: the Jessica episode, withdrawn from the one and added to the other, helps to make the two more equal. Once more, the case, we have seen, is not merely that of a union between stories, but a union between stories opposite in kind, a combination of brightness with gloom. The binding effect of the Jessica Story extends to the union between these opposite tones. We have already had occasion to notice how the two extremes meet in the central scene, how from the height of Bassanio's bliss we pass in an instant to the total ruin of Antonio, which we then learn in its fulness for the first time: the link which connects the two is the arrival of Jessica and her friends as bearers of the news.

iii. ii, from 221.

helping to restore the balance between the main stories,

and a bond between their bright and dark climaxes.

Character effects. Character of Jessica.

So far, the points considered have been points of Mechanism and Plot; in the matter of Character-Interest the Jessica episode is to an even greater degree an addition to the whole effect of the play, Jessica and Lorenzo serving as a foil to Portia and Bassanio. The characters of Jessica and Lorenzo

are charmingly sketched, though liable to misreading unless carefully studied. To appreciate Jessica we must in the first place assume the grossly unjust mediæval view of the Jews as social outcasts. The dramatist has vouchsafed us a glimpse of Shylock at home, and brief as the scene is it is remarkable how much of evil is crowded into it. The breath of home life is trust, yet the one note which seems to pervade the domestic bearing of Shylock is the lowest suspiciousness. Three times as he is starting for Bassanio's supper he draws back to question the motives for which he has been invited. He is moved to a shriek of suspicion by the mere fact of his servant joining him in shouting for the absent Jessica, by the mention of masques, by the sight of the servant whispering to his daughter. Finally, he takes his leave with the words

CHAP. III.

ii. v.

12, 16, 36.

7.

28, 44.

Perhaps I will return immediately, 52.

a device for keeping order in his absence which would be a low one for a nurse to use to a child, but which he is not ashamed of using to his grown-up daughter and the lady of his house. The short scene of fifty-seven lines is sufficient to gives us a further reminder of Shylock's sordid housekeeping, which is glad to get rid of the good-natured Launcelot as a 'huge feeder'; and his aversion to any form of gaiety, which leads him to insist on his shutters being put up when he hears that there is a chance of a pageant in the streets. Amidst surroundings of this type Jessica has grown up, a motherless girl, mingling only with harsh men (for we nowhere see a trace of female companionship for her): it can hardly be objected against her that she should long for a Christian atmosphere in which her affections might have full play. Yet even for this natural reaction she feels compunction:

3, 46.

28.

ii. iii. 20.

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me ii. iii. 16.
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners.

CHAP. III. Formed amidst such influences it would be a triumph to a character if it escaped repulsiveness; Jessica, on the contrary, is full of attractions. She has a simplicity which stands to her in the place of principle. More than this she has a high degree of feminine delicacy. Delicacy will be best brought out in a person who is placed in an equivocal situation, and we see Jessica engaged, not only in an elopement, but in an
ii. iv. 30. elopement which, it appears, has throughout been planned by herself and not by Lorenzo. Of course a quality like feminine delicacy is more conveyed by the bearing of the actress than by positive words; we may however notice the impression which Jessica's part in the elopement scenes makes upon
ii. iv. 30–40. those who are present. When Lorenzo is obliged to make a confidant of Gratiano, and tell him how it is Jessica who has planned the whole affair, instead of feeling any necessity of apologising for her the thought of her childlike innocence moves him to enthusiasm, and it is here that he exclaims:

> If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
> It will be for his gentle daughter's sake.

ii. vi. In the scene of the elopement itself, Jessica has steered clear of both prudishness and freedom, and when after her pretty confusion she has retired from the window, even Gratiano breaks out:

ii. vi. 51. > Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew;

while Lorenzo himself has warmed to see in her qualities he had never expected:

ii. vi. 52. > Beshrew me but I love her heartily;
> For she is wise, if I can judge of her,
> And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,
> And true she is, as she has proved herself,
> And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
> Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

So generally, all with whom she comes into contact feel
ii. iii. 10. her spell: the rough Launcelot parts from her with tears he
iii. i. 41. is ashamed of yet cannot keep down; Salarino—the last of

men to take high views of women—resents as a sort of blasphemy Shylock's claiming her as his flesh and blood; while between Jessica and Portia there seems to spring in an instant an attraction as mysterious as is the tie between Antonio and Bassanio. CHAP. III. iii. iv, v; v. i.

Lorenzo is for the most part of a dreamy inactive nature, as may be seen in his amused tolerance of Launcelot's word-fencing—word-fencing being in general a challenge which none of Shakespeare's characters can resist; similarly, Jessica's enthusiasm on the subject of Portia, which in reality he shares, he prefers to meet with banter: *Character of Lorenzo.* iii. v. 44 75. iii. v. 75-89.

> Even such a husband
> Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

But the strong side of his character also is shown us in the play: he has an artist soul, and to the depth of his passion for music and for the beauty of nature we are indebted for some of the noblest passages in Shakespeare. This is the attraction which has drawn him to Jessica, her outer beauty is the index of artistic sensibility within: 'she is never merry when she hears sweet music,' and the soul of rhythm is awakened in her, just as much as in her husband, by the moonlight scene. Simplicity again, is a quality they have in common, as is seen by their ignorance in money-matters, and the way a valuable turquoise ring goes for a monkey—if, at least, Tubal may be believed: a carelessness of money which mitigates our dislike of the free hand Jessica lays upon her father's ducats and jewels. On the whole, however, Lorenzo's dreaminess makes a pretty contrast to Jessica's vivacity. And Lorenzo's inactivity is capable of being roused to great things. This is seen by the elopement itself: for the suggestion of its incidents seems to be that Lorenzo meant at first no more than trifling with the pretty Jewess, and that he rose to the occasion as he found and appreciated Jessica's higher tone and attraction. Finally, we must see the calibre of Lorenzo's character through the v. i. 1-24, 54-88. v. i. 69, 1-24. iii. i. 113, 123. esp. ii. iv. 20, 30; ii. vi. 30, &c.

CHAP. III. eyes of Portia, who selects him at first sight as the representative to whom to commit her household in her absence, of which commission she will take no refusal.

iii. iv. 24, 32.

Jessica and Lorenzo a foil to Portia and Bassanio.

So interpreted the characters of Jessica and Lorenzo make the whole episode of the elopement an antithesis to the main plot. To a wedded couple in the fresh happiness of their union there can hardly fall a greater luxury than to further the happiness of another couple; this luxury is granted to Portia and Bassanio, and in their reception of the fugitives what picturesque contrasts are brought together! The two pairs are a foil to one another in kind, and set one another off like gold and gems. Lorenzo and Jessica are negative characters with the one positive quality of intense capacity for enjoyment; Bassanio and Portia have everything to enjoy, yet their natures appear dormant till roused by an occasion for daring and energy. The Jewess and her husband are distinguished by the bird-like simplicity that so often goes with special art-susceptibility; Portia and Bassanio are full and rounded characters in which the whole of human nature seems concentrated. The contrast is of degree as well as kind: the weaker pair brought side by side with the stronger throw out the impression of their strength. Portia has a fulness of power which puts her in her most natural position when she is extending protection to those who are less able to stand by themselves. Still more with Bassanio: he has so little scope in the scenes of the play itself, which from the nature of the stories present him always in situations of dependence on others, that we see his strength almost entirely by the reflected light of the attitude which others hold to him; in the present instance we have no difficulty in catching the intellectual power of Lorenzo, and Lorenzo looks up to Bassanio as a superior. And the couples thus contrasted in character present an equal likeness and unlikeness in their fortunes. Both are happy for ever, and both have become so through a bold stroke. Yet

in the one instance it is blind obedience, in face of all temptations, to the mere whims of a good parent, who is dead, that has been guided to the one issue so passionately desired; in the case of the other couple open rebellion, at every practical risk, against the legitimate authority of an evil father, still living, has brought them no worse fate than happiness in one another, and for their defenceless position the best of patrons.

It seems, then, that the introduction of the Jessica Story is justified, not only by the purposes of construction which it serves, but by the fact that its human interest is at once a contrast and a supplement to the main story, with which it blends to produce the ordered variety of a finished picture.

The Rings Episode assists the mechanism of the main stories,

A few words will be sufficient to point out how the effects of the main plot are assisted by the Rings Episode, which, though rich in fun, is of a slighter character than the Jessica Story, and occupies a much smaller space in the field of view. The dramatic points of the two minor stories are similar. Like the Jessica Story the Rings Episode assists the mechanical working out of the main plot. An explanation must somehow be given to Bassanio that the lawyer is Portia in disguise; mere mechanical explanations have always an air of weakness, but the affair of the rings utilises the explanation in the present case as a source of new dramatic effects. This arrangement further assists, to a certain extent, in reducing the improbability of Portia's project. The point at which the improbability would be most felt would be, not the first appearance of the lawyer's clerk, for then we are engrossed in our anxiety for Antonio, but when the explanation of the disguise came to be made; there might be a danger lest here the surprise of Bassanio should become infectious, and the audience should awake to the improbability of the whole story: as it is, their attention is at the critical moment diverted to the perplexity of the penitent

CHAP. III. husbands. The Story of the Rings, like that of Jessica, assists the interweaving of the two main stories with one another, its subtlety suggesting to what a degree of detail this interlacing extends. Bassanio is the main point which unites the Story of the Jew and the Caskets Story; in the one he occupies the position of friend, in the other of husband. The affair of the rings, slight as it is, is so managed by Portia that its point becomes a test as between his friendship and his love; and so equal do these forces appear that, though his friendship finally wins and he surrenders his betrothal ring, yet it is not until after his wife has given him a hint against herself:

and their interweaving;

iv. i. 425–454.

> And if your wife be not a mad-woman,
> And know how well I have deserved the ring,
> She would not hold out enemy for ever
> For giving it to me.

The Rings Episode, even more than the Jessica Story, assists in restoring the balance between the main tales. The chief inequality between them lies in the fact that the Jew Story is complicated and resolved, while the Caskets Story is a simple progress to a goal; when, however, there springs from the latter a sub-action which has a highly comic complication and resolution the two halves of the play become dramatically on a par. And the interweaving of the dark and bright elements in the play is assisted by the fact that the Episode of the Rings not only provides a comic reaction to relieve the tragic crisis, but its whole point is a Dramatic Irony in which serious and comic are inextricably mixed.

and assists in the development of Portia's character.

Finally, as the Jessica Story ministers to Character effect in connection with the general ensemble of the personages, so the Episode of the Rings has a special function in bringing out the character of Portia. The secret of the charm which has won for Portia the suffrages of all readers is the perfect balance of qualities in her character: she is the meeting-point of brightness, force, and tenderness. And, to crown the

union, Shakespeare has placed her at the supreme moment of life, on the boundary line between girlhood and womanhood, when the wider aims and deeper issues of maturity find themselves in strange association with the abandon of youth. The balance thus becomes so perfect that it quivers, and dips to one side and the other. Portia is the saucy child as she sprinkles her sarcasms over Nerissa's enumeration of the suitors: in the trial she faces the world of Venice as a heroine. She is the ideal maiden in the speech in which she surrenders herself to Bassanio: she is the ideal woman as she proclaims from the judgment seat the divinity of mercy. Now the fourth Act has kept before us too exclusively one side of this character. Not that Portia in the lawyer's gown is masculine: but the dramatist has had to dwell too long on her side of strength. He will not dismiss us with this impression, but indulges us in one more daring feat surpassing all the madcap frolics of the past. Thus the Episode of the Rings is the last flicker of girlhood in Portia before it merges in the wider life of womanhood. We have rejoiced in a great deliverance wrought by a noble woman: our enjoyment rises higher yet when the Rings Episode reminds us that this woman has not ceased to be a sportive girl.

i. ii. 39.

iii. ii. 150.

iv. i. 184.

It has been shown, then, that the two inferior stories in *The Merchant of Venice* assist the main stories in the most varied manner, smoothing their mechanical working, meeting their special difficulties, drawing their mutual interweaving yet closer, and throwing their character effects into relief: the additional complexity they have brought has resulted in making emphatic points yet more prominent, and the total effect has therefore been to increase clearness and simplicity. Enough has now been said on the building up of dramas out of stories, which is the distinguishing feature of the Romantic Drama; the studies that follow will be applied to the more universal topics of dramatic interest, Character, Plot, and Passion.

IV.

A PICTURE OF IDEAL VILLAINY IN RICHARD III.

A Study in Character-Interpretation.

CHAP. IV.

Villainy as a subject for art-treatment.

I HOPE that the subject of the present study will not be considered by any reader forbidding. On the contrary, there is surely attractiveness in the thought that nothing is so repulsive or so uninteresting in the world of fact but in some way or other it may be brought under the dominion of art-beauty. The author of *L'Allegro* shows by the companion poem that he could find inspiration in a rainy morning; and the great master in English poetry is followed by a great master in English painting who wins his chief triumphs by his handling of fog and mist. Long ago the masterpiece of Virgil consecrated agricultural toil; Murillo's pictures have taught us that there is a beauty in rags and dirt; rustic commonplaces gave a life passion to Wordsworth, and were the cause of a revolution in poetry; while Dickens has penetrated into the still less promising region of low London life, and cast a halo around the colourless routine of poverty. Men's evil passions have given Tragedy to art, crime is beautified by being linked to Nemesis, meanness is the natural source for brilliant comic effects, ugliness has reserved for it a special form of art in the grotesque, and pain becomes attractive in the light of the heroism that suffers and the devotion that watches. In the infancy of modern English poetry Drayton found a poetic side to topography and maps, and Phineas Fletcher idealised anatomy; while of the two

greatest imaginations belonging to the modern world Milton produced his masterpiece in the delineation of a fiend, and Dante in a picture of hell. The final triumph of good over evil seems to have been already anticipated by art.

The villainy of Richard ideal in its scale, and in its fulness of development.

The portrait of Richard satisfies a first condition of ideality in the scale of the whole picture. The sphere in which he is placed is not private life, but the world of history, in which moral responsibility is the highest: if, therefore, the quality of other villainies be as fine, here the issues are deeper. As another element of the ideal, the villainy of Richard is presented to us fully developed and complete. Often an artist of crime will rely—as notably in the portraiture of Tito Melema—mainly on the succession of steps by which a character, starting from full possession of the reader's sympathies, arrives by the most natural gradations at a height of evil which shocks. In the present case all idea of growth is kept outside the field of this particular play; the opening soliloquy announces a completed process:

> I am determined to prove a villain. — i. i. 30.

What does appear of Richard's past, seen through the favourable medium of a mother's description, only seems to extend the completeness to earlier stages:

> A grievous burthen was thy birth to me: — iv. iv. 167.
> Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;
> Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious,
> Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous,
> Thy age confirm'd, proud, subtle, bloody, treacherous,
> More mild, but yet more harmful, kind in hatred.

So in the details of the play there is nowhere a note of the hesitation that betrays tentative action. (When even Buckingham is puzzled as to what can be done if Hastings should resist, Richard answers:)

> (Chop off his head, man; somewhat we will do.) — iii. i. 193.

His choice is only between different modes of villainy, never between villainy and honesty.

CHAP. IV. Again, it is to be observed that there is no suggestion of impelling motive or other explanation for the villainy of Richard. He does not labour under any sense of personal injury, such as Iago felt in believing, however groundlessly, that his enemies had wronged him through his wife; or Edmund, whose soliloquies display him as conscious that his birth has made his whole life an injury. Nor have we in this case the morbid enjoyment of suffering which we associate with Mephistopheles, and which Dickens has worked up into one of his most powerful portraits in Quilp. Richard never turns aside to gloat over the agonies of his victims; it is not so much the details as the grand schemes of villainy, the handling of large combinations of crime, that have an interest for him: he is a strategist in villainy, not a tactician. Nor can we point to ambition as a sufficient motive. He is ambitious in a sense which belongs to all vigorous natures; he has the workman's impulse to rise by his work. But ambition as a determining force in character must imply more than this; it is a sort of moral dazzling, its symptom is a fascination by ends which blinds to the ruinous means leading up to these ends. Such an ambition was Macbeth's; but in Richard the symptoms are wanting, and in all his long soliloquies he is never found dwelling upon the prize in view. A nearer approach to an explanation would be Richard's sense of bodily deformity. Not only do all who come in contact with him shrink from the 'bottled spider,' but he himself gives a conspicuous place in his meditations to the thought of his ugliness; from the outset he connects his criminal career with the reflection that he 'is not shaped for sportive tricks':

It has no sufficient motive.

Othello: i. iii. 392, &c.

Lear: i. ii. 1–22.

i. iii. 242, 228; iv. iv. 81, &c.

i. i. 14.

> Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time
> Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
> And that so lamely and unfashionable
> That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;
> Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
> Have no delight to pass away the time,

> Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
> And descant on mine own deformity.

Still, it would be going too far to call this the motive of his crimes: the spirit of this and similar passages is more accurately expressed by saying that he has a morbid pleasure in contemplating physical ugliness analogous to his morbid pleasure in contemplating moral baseness. esp. i. ii. 252–264.

There appears, then, no sufficient explanation and motive for the villainy of Richard: the general impression conveyed is that to Richard villainy has become an end in itself needing no special motive. This is one of the simplest principles of human development—that a means to an end tends to become in time an end in itself. The miser who began accumulating to provide comforts for his old age finds the process itself of accumulating gain firmer and firmer hold upon him, until, when old age has come, he sticks to accumulating and foregoes comfort. So in previous plays Gloster may have been impelled by ambition to his crimes: by the time the present play is reached crime itself becomes to him the dearer of the two, and the ambitious end drops out of sight. This leads directly to one of the two main features of Shakespeare's portrait: Richard is an *artist in villainy*. What form and colour are to the painter, what rhythm and imagery are to the poet, that crime is to Richard: it is the medium in which his soul frames its conceptions of the beautiful. The gulf that separates between Shakespeare's Richard and the rest of humanity is no gross perversion of sentiment, nor the development of abnormal passions, nor a notable surrender in the struggle between interest and right. It is that he approaches villainy as a thing of pure intellect, a religion of moral indifference in which sentiment and passion have no place, attraction to which implies no more motive than the simplest impulse to exercise a native talent in its natural sphere.

Villainy has become to Richard an end in itself.

compare *3 Henry VI:* iii. ii. 165–181.

Richard an artist in villainy.

Of the various barriers that exist against crime, the most powerful are the checks that come from human emotions. It

Richard lacks the emotions

CHAP. IV. is easier for a criminal to resist the objections his reason interposes to evildoing than to overcome these emotional restraints: either his own emotions, woven by generations of hereditary transmission into the very framework of his nature, which make his hand tremble in the act of sinning; or the emotions his crimes excite in others, such as will cause hardened wretches, who can die calmly on the scaffold, to cower before the menaces of a mob. Crime becomes possible only because these emotions can be counteracted by more powerful emotions on the other side, by greed, by thirst for vengeance, by inflamed hatred. In Richard, however, when he is surveying his works, we find no such evil emotions raised, no gratified vengeance or triumphant hatred. The reason is that there is in him no restraining emotion to be overcome. Horror at the unnatural is not subdued, but absent; his attitude to atrocity is the passionless attitude of the artist who recognises that the tyrant's cruelty can be set to as good music as the martyr's heroism. Readers are shocked at the scene in which Richard wooes Lady Anne beside the bier of the parent he has murdered, and wonder that so perfect an intriguer should not choose a more favourable time. But the repugnance of the reader has no place in Richard's feelings: the circumstances of the scene are so many *objections*, to be met by so much skill of treatment. A single detail in the play illustrates perfectly this neutral attitude to horror. Tyrrel comes to bring the news of the princes' murder; Richard answers:

naturally attending crime.

I. ii.

IV. iii. 31.

> Come to me, Tyrrel, soon at after supper,
> And thou shalt tell the process of their death.

Quilp could not have waited for his gloating till after supper; other villains would have put the deed out of sight when done; the epicure in villainy reserves his *bonbouche* till he has leisure to do it justice. Callous to his own emotions, he is equally callous to the emotions he rouses in others. When Queen Margaret is pouring a flood of curses which make the inno-

cent courtiers' hair stand on end, and the heaviest curse of all, which she has reserved for Richard himself, is rolling on to its climax, CHAP. IV. i. iii. 216–239.

> Thou slander of thy mother's heavy womb!
> Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins!
> Thou rag of honour! thou detested—

he adroitly slips in the word 'Margaret' in place of the intended 'Richard,' and thus, with the coolness of a schoolboy's small joke, disconcerts her tragic passion in a way that gives a moral wrench to the whole scene. His own mother's curse moves him not even to anger; he caps its clauses with bantering repartees, until he seizes an opportunity for a pun, and begins to move off: he treats her curse, as in a previous scene he had treated her blessing, with a sort of gentle impatience as if tired of a fond yet somewhat troublesome parent. Finally, there is an instinct which serves as resultant to all the complex forces, emotional or rational, which sway us between right and wrong; this instinct of conscience is formally disavowed by Richard: iv. iv, from 136. ii. ii. 109.

> Conscience is but a word that cowards use,
> Devised at first to keep the strong in awe. v. iii. 309.

But, if the natural heat of emotion is wanting, there is, on the other hand, the full intellectual warmth of an artist's enthusiasm, whenever Richard turns to survey the game he is playing. He reflects with a relish how he does the wrong and first begins the brawl, how he sets secret mischief abroach and charges it on to others, beweeping his own victims to simple gulls, and, when these begin to cry for vengeance, quoting Scripture against returning evil for evil, and thus seeming a saint when most he plays the devil. The great master is known by his appreciation of details, in the least of which he can see the play of great principles: so the magnificence of Richard's villainy does not make him insensible to commonplaces of crime. When in the long

But he regards villainy with the intellectual enthusiasm of the artist. i. iii, from 324.

CHAP. IV. usurpation conspiracy there is a moment's breathing space just before the Lord Mayor enters, Richard and Buckingham iii. v. 1–11. utilise it for a burst of hilarity over the deep hypocrisy with which they are playing their parts; how they can counterfeit the deep tragedian, murder their breath in the middle of a world, tremble and start at wagging of a straw:—here we have the musician's flourish upon his instrument from very wantonness of skill. Again:

i. i. 118.

> Simple, plain Clarence! I do love thee so
> That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven—

is the composer's pleasure at hitting upon a readily workable theme. Richard appreciates his murderers as a workman appreciates good tools:

i. iii. 354.

> Your eyes drop millstones, when fools' eyes drop tears:
> I like you, lads.

i. ii, from 228. And at the conclusion of the scene with Lady Anne we have the artist's enjoyment of his own masterpiece:

> Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?
> Was ever woman in this humour won? . . .
> What! I, that kill'd her husband and his father,
> To take her in her heart's extremest hate,
> With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,
> The bleeding witness of her hatred by;
> Having God, her conscience, and these bars against me,
> And I nothing to back my suit at all,
> But the plain devil and dissembling looks,
> And yet to win her, all the world to nothing!

The tone in this passage is of the highest: it is the tone of a musician fresh from a triumph of his art, the sweetest point in which has been that he has condescended to no adventitious aids, no assistance of patronage or concessions to popular tastes; it has been won by pure music. So the artist in villainy celebrates a triumph of *plain devil!*

The villainy ideal in

This view of Richard as an artist in crime is sufficient to explain the hold which villainy has on Richard himself; but

success: a fascination of irresistibility in Richard.

ideal villainy must be ideal also in its success; and on this side of the analysis another conception in Shakespeare's portraiture becomes of first importance. It is obvious enough that Richard has all the elements of success which can be reduced to the form of skill: but he has something more. No theory of human action will be complete which does not recognise a dominion of will over will operating by mere contact, without further explanation so far as conscious influence is concerned. What is it that takes the bird into the jaws of the serpent? No persuasion or other influence on the bird's consciousness, for it struggles to keep back; we can only recognise the attraction as a force, and give it a name, fascination. (In Richard there is a similar fascination of irresistibility, which also operates by his mere presence,) and which fights for him in the same way in which the idea of their invincibility fought for conquerors like Napoleon, and was on occasions as good to them as an extra twenty or thirty thousand men. A consideration like this will be appreciated in the case of *tours de force* like the Wooing of Lady Anne, which is a stumblingblock to many readers—a widow beside the bier of her murdered husband's murdered father wooed and won by the man who makes no secret that he is the murderer of them both. The analysis of ordinary human motives would make it appear that Anne would not yield at points at which the scene represents her as yielding; some other force is wanted to explain her surrender, and it is found in this secret force of irresistible will which Richard bears about with him. But, it will be asked, in what does this fascination appear? The answer is that the idea of it is furnished to us by the other scenes of the play. Such a consideration illustrates the distinction between real and ideal. An ideal incident is not an incident of real life simply clothed in beauty of expression; nor, on the other hand, is an ideal incident divorced from the laws of real possibility. Ideal implies that the transcendental has been made possible by treatment: that

CHAP. IV.

an incident (for example) which might be impossible in itself becomes possible through other incidents with which it is associated, just as in actual life the action of a public personage which may have appeared strange at the time becomes intelligible when at his death we can review his life as a whole. Such a scene as the Wooing Scene might be impossible as a fragment; it becomes possible enough in the play, where it has to be taken in connection with the rest of the plot, throughout which the irresistibility of the hero is prominent as one of the chief threads of connection. Nor is it any objection that the Wooing Scene comes early in the action. The play is not the book, but the actor's interpretation on the stage, and the actor will have collected even from the latest scenes elements of the interpretation he throws into the earliest: the actor is a lens for concentrating the light of the whole play upon every single detail. The fascination of irresistibility, then, which is to act by instinct in every scene, may be arrived at analytically when we survey the play as a whole—when we see how by Richard's innate genius, by the reversal in him of the ordinary relation of human nature to crime, especially by his perfect mastery of the successive situations as they arise, the dramatist steadily builds up an irresistibility which becomes a secret force clinging to Richard's presence, and through the operation of which his feats are half accomplished by the fact of his attempting them.

The fascination is to be conveyed in the acting.

The irresistibility analysed. Unlikely means.

To begin with: the sense of irresistible power is brought out by the way in which the unlikeliest things are continually drawn into his schemes and utilised as means. Not to speak of his regular affectation of blunt sincerity, he makes use of the simple brotherly confidence of Clarence as an engine of fraticide, and founds on the frank familiarity existing between himself and Hastings a plot by which he brings him to the block. The Queen's compunction at the thought of leaving Clarence out of the

i. i, from 42. iii. iv; esp. 76 compared with iii. i. 184.

general reconciliation around the dying king's bedside is the fruit of a conscience tenderer than her neighbours': Richard adroitly seizes it as an opportunity for shifting on to the Queen and her friends the suspicion of the duke's murder. The childish prattle of little York Richard manages to suggest to the bystanders as dangerous treason; the solemnity of the king's deathbed he turns to his own purposes by outdoing all the rest in Christian forgiveness and humility; and he selects devout meditation as the card to play with the Lord Mayor and citizens. On the other hand, amongst other devices for the usurpation conspiracy, he starts a slander upon his own mother's purity; and further—by one of the greatest strokes in the whole play—makes capital in the Wooing Scene out of his own heartlessness, describing in a burst of startling eloquence the scenes of horror he has passed through, the only man unmoved to tears, in order to add:

ii. i, from 73; cf. 134.

iii. i. 154.

ii. i. 52–72.

iii. v. 99, &c.

iii. v. 75–94.

i. ii. 156–167.

> And what these sorrows could not thence exhale,
> Thy beauty hath, and made them blind with weeping.

There are things which are too sacred for villainy to touch, and there are things which are protected by their own foulness: both alike are made useful by Richard.

The sensation produced by one crime made to bring about others.

Similarly it is to be noticed how Richard can utilise the very sensation produced by one crime as a means to bring about more; as when he interrupts the King's dying moments to announce the death of Clarence in such a connection as must give a shock to the most unconcerned spectator, and then draws attention to the pale faces of the Queen's friends as marks of guilt. He thus makes one crime beget another without further effort on his part, reversing the natural law by which each criminal act, through its drawing more suspicion to the villain, tends to limit his power for further mischief. It is to the same purpose that Richard chooses sometimes instead of acting himself to foist his own schemes on to others; as when he inspires Buckingham with the

ii. i, from 77; cf. 134.

Richard's own plans foisted on to others.

CHAP. IV. idea of the young king's arrest, and, when Buckingham seizes the idea as his own, meekly accepts it from him:

ii. ii. 112–154; esp. 149.

> I, like a child, will go by thy direction.

There is in all this a dreadful *economy* of crime: not the economy of prudence seeking to reduce its amount, but the artist's economy which delights in bringing the largest number of effects out of a single device. Such skill opens up a vista of evil which is boundless.

No signs of effort in Richard: imperturbability of mind;

The sense of irresistible power is again brought out by his perfect imperturbability of mind: villainy never ruffles his spirits. He never misses the irony that starts up in the circumstances around him, and says to Clarence:

i. i. 111.

> This deep disgrace in brotherhood
> *Touches* me deeply.

While taking his part in entertaining the precocious King he treats us to continual asides—

iii. i. 79, 94.

> So wise so young, they say, do never live long—

showing how he can stop to criticise the scenes in which he is an actor. He can delay the conspiracy on which his

iii. iv. 24.

chance of the crown depends by coming late to the council, and then while waiting the moment for turning upon his

iii. iv. 52.

victim is cool enough to recollect the Bishop of Ely's straw-

humour;

berries. But more than all these examples is to be noted Richard's *humour*. This is *par excellence* the sign of a mind at ease with itself: scorn, contempt, bitter jest belong to the storm of passion, but humour is the sunshine of the soul. Yet Shakespeare has ventured to endow Richard with unquestionable humour. Thus, in one of his earliest

i. i. 151–156.

meditations, he prays, 'God take King Edward to his mercy,' for then he will marry Warwick's youngest daughter:

> What though I killed her husband and her father!
> The readiest way to make the wench amends
> Is to become her husband and her father!

e.g. i. i. 118; ii. ii.

And all through there perpetually occur little turns of lan-

guage into which the actor can throw a tone of humorous enjoyment; notably, when he complains of being 'too childish-foolish for this world,' and where he nearly ruins the effect of his edifying penitence in the Reconciliation Scene, by being unable to resist one final stroke: CHAP. IV. 109; iv. iii. 38, 43; i. iii. 142; ii. i. 72; iii. vii. 51-54, &c.

> I thank my God for my humility!

freedom from prejudice.

Of a kindred nature is his perfect frankness and fairness to his victims: villainy never clouds his judgment. Iago, astutest of intriguers, was deceived, as has been already noted, by his own morbid acuteness, and firmly believed—what the simplest spectator can see to be a delusion—that Othello has tampered with his wife. Richard, on the contrary, is a marvel of judicial impartiality; he speaks of King Edward in such terms as these—

> If King Edward be as true and just — i. i. 36.
> As I am subtle, false and treacherous;

and weighs elaborately the superior merit of one of his victims to his own:

> Hath she forgot already that brave prince, — i. ii, from 240.
> Edward, her lord, whom I, some three months since,
> Stabb'd in my angry mood at Tewksbury?
> A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,
> Framed in the prodigality of nature,
> Young, valiant, wise, and, no doubt, right royal,
> The spacious world cannot again afford:
> And will she yet debase her eyes on me,
> That cropped the golden prime of this sweet prince,
> And made her widow to a woful bed?
> On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety?

Richard can rise to all his height of villainy without its leaving on himself the slightest trace of struggle or even effort.

A recklessness suggesting boundless resources.

Again, the idea of boundless resource is suggested by an occasional recklessness, almost a slovenliness, in the details of his intrigues. Thus, in the early part of the Wooing

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF

CHAP. IV. Scene he makes two blunders of which a tyro in intrigue might be ashamed. He denies that he is the author of Edward's death, to be instantly confronted with the evidence of Margaret as an eye-witness. Then a few lines further on he goes to the opposite extreme:

i. ii. 91.

i. ii. 101.

Anne. Didst thou not kill this king?
Glouc. I grant ye.
Anne. Dost grant me, hedgehog?

The merest beginner would know better how to meet accusations than by such haphazard denials and acknowledgments. But the crack billiard-player will indulge at the beginning of the game in a little clumsiness, giving his adversaries a prospect of victory only to have the pleasure of making up the disadvantage with one or two brilliant strokes. And so Richard, essaying the most difficult problem ever attempted in human intercourse, lets half the interview pass before he feels it worth while to play with caution.

General character of Richard's intrigue: inspiration rather than calculation.

The mysterious irresistibility of Richard, pointed to by the succession of incidents in the play, is assisted by the very improbability of some of the more difficult scenes in which he is an actor. Intrigue in general is a thing of reason, and its probabilities can be readily analysed; but the genius of intrigue in Richard seems to make him avoid the caution of other intriguers, and to give him a preference for feats which seem impossible. The whole suggests how it is not by calculation that he works, but he brings the *touch* of an artist to his dealing with human weakness, and follows whither his artist's inspiration leads him. If, then, there is nothing so remote from evil but Richard can make it tributary; if he can endow crimes with power of self-multiplying; if he can pass through a career of sin without the taint of distortion on his intellect and with the unruffled calmness of innocence; if Richard accomplishes feats no other would attempt with a carelessness no other reputation would risk, even slow reason may well believe him irresistible. When,

further, such qualifications for villainy become, by unbroken success in villainy, reflected in Richard's very bearing; when the only law explaining his motions to onlookers is the lawlessness of genius whose instinct is more unerring than the most laborious calculation and planning, it becomes only natural that the *opinion* of his irresistibility should become converted into a mystic *fascination*, making Richard's very presence a signal to his adversaries of defeat, chilling with hopelessness the energies with which they are to face his consummate skill.

The two main ideas of Shakespeare's portrait, the idea of an artist in crime and the fascination of invincibility which Richard bears about with him, are strikingly illustrated in the wooing of Lady Anne. For a long time Richard will not put forth effort, but meets the loathing and execration hurled at him with repartee, saying in so many words that he regards the scene as a 'keen encounter of our wits.' All this time the mysterious power of his presence is operating, the more strongly as Lady Anne sees the most unanswerable cause that denunciation ever had to put produce no effect upon her adversary, and feels her own confidence in her wrongs recoiling upon herself. When the spell has had time to work then he assumes a serious tone: suddenly, as we have seen, turning the strong point of Anne's attack, his own inhuman nature, into the basis of his plea—he who never wept before has been softened by love to her. From this point he urges his cause with breathless speed; he presses a sword into her hand with which to pierce his breast, knowing that she lacks the nerve to wield it, and seeing how such forbearance on her part will be a starting-point in giving way. We can trace the sinking of her will before the unconquerable will of her adversary in her feebler and feebler refusals, while as yet very shame keeps her to an outward defiance. Then, when she is wishing to yield, he suddenly finds her an excuse by declaring that all he desires at this

i. ii. 115.

from 152.

175.

from 193.

CHAP. IV. moment is that she should leave the care of the King's funeral

> To him that hath more cause to be a mourner.

By yielding this much to penitence and religion we see she has commenced a downward descent from which she will never recover. Such consummate art in the handling of human nature, backed by the spell of an irresistible presence, the weak Anne has no power to combat. To the last she is as much lost in amazement as the reader at the way it has all come about:

iv. i. 66–87.

> Lo, ere I can repeat this curse again,
> Even in so short a space, my woman's heart
> Grossly grew captive to his honey words.

Ideal v. real villainy.

To gather up our results. A dramatist is to paint a portrait of ideal villainy as distinct from villainy in real life. In real life it is a commonplace that a virtuous life is a life of effort; but the converse is not true, that he who is prepared to be a villain will therefore lead an easy life. On the contrary, 'the *way* of transgressors is hard.' The metaphor suggests a path, laid down at first by the Architect of the universe, beaten plain and flat by the generations of men who have since trodden it: he who keeps within this path of rectitude will walk, not without effort, yet at least with safety; but he who 'steps aside' to the right or left will find his way beset with pitfalls and stumblingblocks. In real life a man sets out to be a villain, but his mental power is deficient, and he remains a villain only in intention. Or he has stores of power, but lacks the spark of purpose to set them aflame. Or, armed with both will to plan and mind to execute, yet his efforts are hampered by unfit tools. Or, if his purpose needs reliance alone on his own clear head and his own strong arm, yet in the critical moment the emotional nature he has inherited with his humanity starts into rebellion and scares him, like Macbeth, from the half-

accomplished deed. Or, if he is as hardened in nature as corrupt in mind and will, yet he is closely pursued by a mocking fate, which crowns his well-laid plans with a mysterious succession of failures. Or, if there is no other limitation on him from within or from without, yet he may move in a world too narrow to give him scope: the man with a heart to be the scourge of his nation proves in fact no more than the vagabond of a country side.—But in Shakespeare's portrait we have infinite capacity for mischief, needing no purpose, for evil has become to it an end in itself; we have one who for tools can use the baseness of his own nature or the shame of those who are his nearest kin, while at his touch all that is holiest becomes transformed into weapons of iniquity. We have one whose nature in the past has been a gleaning ground for evil in every stage of his development, and who in the present is framed to look on unnatural horror with the eyes of interested curiosity. We have one who seems to be seconded by fate with a series of successes, which builds up for him an irresistibility that is his strongest safeguard; and who, instead of being cramped by circumstances, has for his stage the world of history itself, in which crowns are the prize and nations the victims. In such a portrait is any element wanting to arrive at the ideal of villainy?

Ideal villainy v. monstrosity.

The question would rather be whether Shakespeare has not gone too far, and, passing outside the limits of art, exhibited a monstrosity. Nor is it an answer to point to the 'dramatic hedging' by which Richard is endowed with undaunted personal courage, unlimited intellectual power, and every good quality not inconsistent with his perfect villainy. The objection to such a portrait as the present study presents is that it offends against our sense of the principles upon which the universe has been constructed; we feel that before a violation of nature could attain such proportions nature must have exerted her recuperative force to crush it. If, however,

Nemesis = retributive justice

CHAP. IV. the dramatist can suggest that such reassertion of nature is actually made, that the crushing blow is delayed only while it is accumulating force: in a word, if the dramatist can draw out before us a *Nemesis* as ideal as the villainy was ideal, then the full demands of art will be satisfied. The Nemesis that dominates the whole play of *Richard III* will be the subject of the next study.

V.

Richard III: How Shakespeare weaves Nemesis into History.

A Study in Plot.

Richard III: from the Character side a violation of Nemesis

I HAVE alluded already to the dangerous tendency, which, as it appears to me, exists amongst ordinary readers of Shakespeare, to ignore plot as of secondary importance, and to look for Shakespeare's greatness mainly in his conceptions of character. But the full character effect of a dramatic portrait cannot be grasped if it be dissociated from the plot; and this is nowhere more powerfully illustrated than in the play of *Richard III.* The last study was devoted exclusively to the Character side of the play, and on this confined view the portrait of Richard seemed a huge offence against our sense of moral equilibrium, rendering artistic satisfaction impossible. Such an impression vanishes when, as in the present study, the drama is looked at from the side of Plot. The effect of this plot is, however, missed by those who limit their attention in reviewing it to Richard himself. These may feel that there is nothing in his fate to compensate for the spectacle of his crimes: man must die, and a death in fulness of energy amid the glorious stir of battle may seem a fate to be envied. But the Shakespearean Drama with its complexity of plot is not limited to the individual life and fate in its interpretation of history; and when we survey all the distinct trains of interest in the play of *Richard III*, with their blendings and mutual influence, we shall obtain a sense of dramatic satisfaction

from the side of Plot, the transformation of history into Nemesis.

CHAP. V. amply counterbalancing the monstrosity of Richard's villainy. Viewed as a study in character the play leaves in us only an intense craving for Nemesis: when we turn to consider the plot, this presents to us the world of history transformed into an intricate design of which the recurrent pattern is Nemesis.

The under-plot: a set of separate Nemesis Actions. This notion of tracing a pattern in human affairs is a convenient key to the exposition of plot. Laying aside for the present the main interest of Richard himself, we may observe that the bulk of the drama consists in a number of minor interests—single threads of the pattern—each of

Clarence. which is a separate example of Nemesis. The first of these trains of interest centres around the Duke of Clarence. He has betrayed the Lancastrians, to whom he had solemnly sworn

i. iv. 50, 66. fealty, for the sake of the house of York; this perjury is his bitterest recollection in his hour of awakened conscience, and is urged home by the taunts of his murderers; while his only defence is that he did it all for his brother's love. Yet his

ii. i. 86. lot is to fall by a treacherous death, the warrant for which is signed by his brother, the King and head of the Yorkist house,

i. iv. 250. while its execution is procured by the bulwark of the house,

The King. the intriguing Richard. The centre of the second nemesis is the King, who has thus allowed himself in a moment of suspicion to be made a tool for the murder of his brother,

ii. i. 77–133. seeking to stop it when too late. Shakespeare has contrived that this death of Clarence, announced as it is in so terrible a manner beside the King's sick bed, gives him a shock from which he never rallies, and he is carried out to die with the words on his lips:

> O God, I fear Thy justice will take hold
> On me, and you, and mine, and yours, for this.

The Queen and her kindred. In this nemesis on the King are associated the Queen and her kindred. They have been assenting parties to the measures against Clarence (however little they may have contemplated the bloody issue to which those measures have

been brought by the intrigues of Gloster). This we must understand from the introduction of Clarence's children, who serve no purpose except to taunt the Queen in her bereavement: ii. ii. 62–65

> *Boy.* Good aunt, you wept not for our father's death;
> How can we aid you with our kindred tears?
> *Girl.* Our fatherless distress was left unmoan'd;
> Your widow-dolour likewise be unwept!

The death of the King, so unexpectedly linked to that of Clarence, removes from the Queen and her kindred the sole bulwark to the hated Woodville family, and leaves them at the mercy of their enemies. A third Nemesis Action has Hastings for its subject. Hastings is the head of the court-faction which is opposed to the Queen and her allies, and he passes all bounds of decency in his exultation at the fate which overwhelms his adversaries: ii. ii. 74, &c. *Hastings.* i. i. 66; iii. ii. 58, &c.

> But I shall laugh at this a twelvemonth hence,
> That they who brought me in my master's hate,
> I live to look upon their tragedy.

He even forgets his dignity as a nobleman, and stops on his way to the Tower to chat with a mere officer of the court, in order to tell him the news of which he is full, that his enemies are to die that day at Pomfret. Yet this very journey of Hastings is his journey to the block; the same cruel fate which had descended upon his opponents, from the same agent and by the same unscrupulous doom, is dealt out to Hastings in his turn. In this treacherous casting off of Hastings when he is no longer useful, Buckingham has been a prime agent. Buckingham amused himself with the false security of Hastings, adding to Hastings's innocent expression of his intention to stay dinner at the Tower the aside iii. ii. 97. *Buckingham.* iii. ii, from 114.

> And supper too, although thou know'st it not;

while in the details of the judicial murder he plays second to Richard. By precisely similar treachery he is himself cast

CHAP. V. off when he hesitates to go further with Richard's villainous schemes; and in precisely similar manner the treachery is flavoured with contempt.

iv. ii, from 86.

Buck. I am thus bold to put your grace in mind
Of what you promised me.
K. Rich. Well, but what 's o'clock?
Buck. Upon the stroke of ten.
K. Rich. Well, let it strike.
Buck. Why let it strike?
K. Rich. Because that, like a Jack, thou keep'st the stroke
Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.
I am not in the giving vein to-day.
Buck. Why, then resolve me whether you will or no.
K. Rich. Tut, tut,
Thou troublest me; I am not in the vein.
[*Exeunt all but Buckingham.*
Buck. Is it even so? rewards he my true service
With such deep contempt? made I him king for this?
O, let me think on Hastings, and be gone
To Brecknock, while my fearful head is on!

The four nemeses formed into a system by Nemesis as a link.

These four Nemesis Actions, it will be observed, are not separate trains of incident going on side by side, they are linked together into a system, the law of which is seen to be that those who triumph in one nemesis become the victims of the next; so that the whole suggests a 'chain of destruction,' like that binding together the orders of the brute creation which live by preying upon one another. When Clarence perished it was the King who dealt the doom and the Queen's party who triumphed: the wheel of Nemesis goes round and the King's death follows the death of his victim, the Queen's kindred are naked to the vengeance of their enemies, and Hastings is left to exult. Again the wheel of Nemesis revolves, and Hastings at the moment of his highest exultation is hurled to destruction, while Buckingham stands by to point the moral with a gibe. Once more the wheel goes round, and Buckingham hears similar gibes addressed to himself and points the same moral in his own person. Thus the portion of the drama we have so far considered

yields us a pattern within a pattern, a series of Nemesis Actions woven into a complete underplot by a connecting-link which is also Nemesis.

The 'Enveloping Action' a Nemesis.

Following out the same general idea we may proceed to notice how the dramatic pattern is surrounded by a fringe or border. The picture of life presented in a play will have the more reality if it be connected with a life wider than its own. There is no social sphere, however private, but is to some extent affected by a wider life outside it, this by one wider still, until the great world is reached the story of which is History. The immediate interest may be in a single family, but it will be a great war which, perhaps, takes away some member of this family to die in battle, or some great commercial crisis which brings mutation of fortune to the obscure home. The artists of fiction are solicitous thus to suggest connections between lesser and greater; it is the natural tendency of the mind to pass from the known to the unknown, and if the artist can derive the movements in his little world from the great world outside, he appears to have given his fiction a basis of admitted truth to rest on. This device of enclosing the incidents of the actual story in a framework of great events—technically, the 'Enveloping Action'—is one which is common in Shakespeare; it is enough to instance such a case as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which play a fairy story has a measure of historic reality given to it by its connection with the marriage of personages so famous as Theseus and Hippolyta. In the present case, the main incidents and personages belong to public life; nevertheless the effect in question is still secured, and the contest of factions with which the play is occupied is represented as making up only a few incidents in the great feud of Lancaster and York. This Enveloping Action of the whole play, the War of the Roses, is marked with special clearness: two personages are introduced for the sole purpose of giving it prominence. The Duchess of York is by her years and

ii. ii. 80.

CHAP. V.

position the representative of the whole house; the factions who in the play successively triumph and fall are all descended from herself; she says:

> Alas, I am the mother of these moans!
> Their woes are parcell'd, mine are general.

i. iii, from III; and iv. iv. 1–125.

And probabilities are forced to bring in Queen Margaret, the head and sole rallying-point of the ruined Lancastrians: when the two aged women are confronted the whole civil war is epitomised. It is hardly necessary to point out that this Enveloping Action is itself a Nemesis Action. All the rising and falling, the suffering and retaliation that we actually see going on between the different sections of the Yorkist house, constitute a detail in a wider retribution: the presence of the Duchess gives to the incidents a unity, Queen Margaret's function is to point out that this unity of woe is only the nemesis falling on the house of York for their wrongs to the house of Lancaster. Thus the pattern made up of so many reiterations of Nemesis is enclosed in a border which itself repeats the same figure.

esp. ii. ii; iv. i; iv. iv. ii. iii; and iv. iv.

The Enveloping Nemesis carried on into indefiniteness.

The effect is carried further. Generally the Enveloping Action is a sort of curtain by which our view of a drama is bounded; in the present case the curtain is at one point lifted, and we get a glimpse into the world beyond. Queen Margaret has surprised the Yorkist courtiers, and her prophetic denunciations are still ringing, in which she points to the calamities her foes have begun to suffer as retribution for the woes of which her fallen greatness is the representative —when Gloster suddenly turns the tables upon her:

i. iii. 174–194.

> The curse my noble father laid on thee,
> When thou didst crown his warlike brows with paper
> And with thy scorns drew'st rivers from his eyes,
> And then, to dry them, gavest the duke a clout
> Steep'd in the faultless blood of pretty Rutland,—
> His curses, then from bitterness of soul
> Denounced against thee, are all fall'n upon thee;
> And God, not we, hath plagu'd thy bloody deed.

And the new key-note struck by Gloster is taken up in chorus by the rest, who find relief from the crushing effect of Margaret's curses by pressing the charge home upon her. This is only a detail, but it is enough to carry the effect of the Enveloping Action a degree further back in time: the events of the play are nemesis on York for wrongs done to Lancaster, but now, it seems, these old wrongs against Lancaster were retribution for yet older crimes Lancaster had committed against York. As in architecture the vista is contrived so as to carry the general design of the building into indefiniteness, so here, while the grand nemesis, of which Margaret's presence is the representative, shuts in the play like a veil, the momentary lifting of the veil opens up a vista of nemeses receding further and further back into history.

The one attempt to reverse the nemesis confirms it.

Once more. All that we have seen suggests it as a sort of law to the feud of York and Lancaster that each is destined to wreak vengeance on the other, and then itself suffer in turn. But at one notable point of the play an attempt is made to evade the hereditary nemesis by the marriage of Richard and Lady Anne. Anne, daughter to Warwick—the grand deserter to the Lancastrians and martyr to their cause—widow to the murdered heir of the house and chief mourner to its murdered head, is surely the greatest sufferer of the Lancastrians at the hands of the Yorkists. Richard is certainly the chief avenger of York upon Lancaster. When the chief source of vengeance and the chief sufferer are united in the closest of all bonds, the attempt to evade Nemesis becomes ideal. Yet what is the consequence? This attempt of Lady Anne to evade the hereditary curse proves the very channel by which the curse descends upon herself. We see her once more: she is then on her way to the Tower, and we hear her tell the strange story of her wooing, and wish the crown were 'red hot steel to sear her to the brain'; never, she says, since her union

i. ii.

iv. i. 66–87.

CHAP. V.

with Richard has she enjoyed the golden dew of sleep; she is but waiting for the destruction, by which, no doubt, Richard will shortly rid himself of her.

To counteract the effect of repetition the nemeses are specially emphasised:

An objection may, however, here present itself, that continual repetition of an idea like Nemesis, tends to weaken its artistic effect, until it comes to be taken for granted. No doubt it is a law of taste that force may be dissipated by repetition if carried beyond a certain point. But it is to be noted, on the other hand, what pains Shakespeare has taken to counteract the tendency in the present instance. The force of a nemesis may depend upon a fitness that addresses itself to the spectator's reflection, or it may be measured by the degree to which the nemesis is brought into prominence in the incidents themselves. In the incidents of the present play special means are adopted to make the recognition of the successive nemeses as they arise emphatic. In the first place the nemesis is in each case pointed out at the moment of its fulfilment. In the case of Clarence his story of crime and retribution is reflected in his dream before it is brought to a conclusion in reality; and wherein the bitterness of this review consists, we see when he turns to his sympathising jailor and says:

by recognition,

i. iv, from 18.

i. iv. 66.

> O Brackenbury, I have done those things,
> Which now bear evidence against my soul,
> For Edward's sake: and see how he requites me!

The words have already been quoted in which the King recognises how God's justice has overtaken him for his part in Clarence's death, and those in which the children of Clarence taunt the Queen with her having herself to bear the bereavement she has made them suffer. As the Queen's kindred are being led to their death, one of them exclaims:

iii. iii. 15.

> Now Margaret's curse is fall'n upon our heads
> For standing by when Richard stabb'd her son.

Hastings, when his doom has wakened him from his infatuation, recollects a priest he had met on his way to the

Tower, with whom he had stopped to talk about the dis- CHAP. V.
comfiture of his enemies:

> O, now I want the priest that spake to me! — iii. iv. 89.

Buckingham on his way to the scaffold apostrophises the souls of his victims:

> If that your moody discontented souls — v. i. 7.
> Do through the clouds behold this present hour,
> Even for revenge mock my destruction.

And such individual notes of recognition are collected into a sort of chorus when Margaret appears the second time to iv. iv. 1, 35.
point out the fulfilment of her curses, and sits down beside the old Duchess and her daughter-in-law to join in the 'society of sorrow' and 'cloy her' with beholding the revenge for which she has hungered.

Again, the nemeses have a further emphasis given to *by prophecy,*
them by prophecy. As Queen Margaret's second appear- i. iii, from
ance is to mark the fulfilment of a general retribution, so her 195.
first appearance denounced it beforehand in the form of
curses. And the effect is carried on in individual prophecies: the Queen's friends as they suffer foresee that the turn of the opposite party will come:

> You live that shall cry woe for this hereafter; — iii. iii. 7.

and Hastings prophesies Buckingham's doom:

> They smile at me that shortly shall be dead. — iii. iv. 109.

It is as if the atmosphere cleared for each sufferer with the approach of death, and they then saw clearly the righteous plan on which the universe is constructed, and which had been hidden from them by the dust of life.

But there is a third means, more powerful than either re- *and especially by irony.*
cognition or prophecy, which Shakespeare has employed to
make his Nemesis Actions emphatic. The danger of an effect becoming tame by repetition he has met by giving to each train of nemesis a flash of irony at some point of its course. In the case of Lady Anne we have already seen how the exact channel Nemesis chooses by which to descend upon

CHAP. V.

her is the attempt she made to avert it. She had bitterly cursed her husband's murderer:

iv. i. 75.

> And be thy wife—if any be so mad—
> As miserable by the life of thee
> As thou hast made me by my dear lord's death!

In spite of this she had yielded to Richard's mysterious power, and so, as she feels, proved the *subject of her own heart's curse.* Again, it was noticed in the preceding study how the Queen, less hard than the rest in that wicked court, or perhaps softened by the spectacle of her dying husband, essayed to reverse, when too late, what had been done against Clarence; Gloster skilfully turned this compunction

ii. i. 134.

of conscience into a ground of suspicion on which he traded to bring all the Queen's friends to the block, and thus a moment's relenting was made into a means of destruction. In Clarence's struggle for life, as one after another the

i. iv. 187, 199, 200, 206.

threads of hope snap, as the appeal to law is met by the King's command, the appeal to heavenly law by the reminder of his own sin, he comes to rest for his last and surest

i. iv. 232.

hope upon his powerful brother Gloster—and the very murderers catch the irony of the scene:

> *Clar.* If you be hired for meed, go back again,
> And I will send you to my brother Gloster,
> Who shall reward you better for my life
> Than Edward will for tidings of my death.
> *Sec. Murd.* You are deceived, your brother Gloster hates you.
> *Clar.* O, no, he loves me, and he holds me dear:
> Go you to him from me.
> *Both.* Ay, so we will.
> *Clar.* Tell him, when that our princely father York
> Bless'd his three sons with his victorious arm,
> And charg'd us from his soul to love each other,
> He little thought of this divided friendship:
> Bid Gloster think of this, and he will weep.
> *First Murd.* Ay, millstones; as he lesson'd us to weep.
> *Clar.* O, do not slander him, for he is kind.
> *First Murd.* Right,
> As snow in harvest. Thou deceivest thyself:
> 'Tis he that sent us hither now to slaughter thee.

Clar. It cannot be; for when I parted with him,
He hugg'd me in his arms, and swore, with sobs,
That he would labour my delivery.
Sec. Murd. Why, so he doth, now he delivers thee
From this world's thraldom to the joys of heaven.

In the King's case a special incident is introduced into the scene to point the irony. Before Edward can well realise the terrible announcement of Clarence's death, the decorum of the royal chamber is interrupted by Derby, who bursts in, anxious not to lose the portion of the king's life that yet remains, in order to beg a pardon for his follower. The King feels the shock of contrast: ii. i. 95.

Have I a tongue to doom my brother's death,
And shall the same give pardon to a slave?

The prerogative of mercy that exists in so extreme a case as the murder of a 'righteous gentleman,' and is so passionately sought by Derby for a servant, is denied to the King himself for the deliverance of his innocent brother. The nemesis on Hastings is saturated with irony; he has the simplest reliance on Richard and on 'his servant Catesby,' who has come to him as the agent of Richard's treachery; and the very words of the scene have a double significance that all see but Hastings himself. iii. ii, from 41.

Hast. I tell thee Catesby,—
Cate. What, my lord?
Hast. Ere a fortnight make me elder
I'll send some packing that yet think not on it.
Cate. 'Tis a vile thing to die, my gracious lord,
When men are unprepared, and look not for it.
Hast. O monstrous, monstrous! and so falls it out
With Rivers, Vaughan, Grey: and so 'twill do
With some men else, who think themselves as safe
As thou and I.

As the scenes with Margaret constituted a general summary of the individual prophecies and recognitions, so the Reconciliation Scene around the King's dying bed may be said to gather into a sort of summary the irony distributed through ii. i.

CHAP. V. the play; for the effect of the incident is that the different parties pray for their own destruction. In this scene Buckingham has taken the lead and struck the most solemn notes in his pledge of amity; when Buckingham comes to die, his bitterest thought seems to be that the day of his death is All Souls' Day.

ii. i. 32.

v. i, from 10.

> *This is the day* that, in King Edward's time,
> I wish'd might fall on me, when I was found
> False to his children or his wife's allies;
> This is the day wherein I wish'd to fall
> By the false faith of him I trusted most; . . . .
> That high All-Seer that I dallied with
> Hath turn'd my feigned prayer on my head
> And given in earnest what I begg'd in jest.

By devices, then, such as these; by the sudden revelation of a remedy when it is just too late to use it; by the sudden memory of clear warnings blindly missed; by the spectacle of a leaning for hope upon that which is known to be ground for despair; by attempts to retreat or turn aside proving short cuts to destruction; above all by the sufferer's perception that he himself has had a chief share in bringing about his doom:—by such irony the monotony of Nemesis is relieved, and fatality becomes flavoured with mockery.

This multiplication of Nemesis a dramatic background for the villainy of Richard.

Dramatic design, like design which appeals more directly to the eye, has its perspective: to miss even by a little the point of view from which it is to be contemplated is enough to throw the whole into distortion. So readers who are not careful to watch the harmony between Character and Plot have often found in the present play nothing but wearisome repetition. Or, as there is only a step between the sublime and the ridiculous, this masterpiece of Shakespearean plot has suggested to them only the idea of Melodrama,—that curious product of dramatic feeling without dramatic inventiveness, with its world in which poetic justice has become prosaic, in which conspiracy is never so superhumanly secret but there comes a still more superhuman detection, and how-

ever successful villainy may be for a moment the spectator confidently relies on its being eventually disposed of by a summary 'off with his head.' The point of view thus missed in the present play is that this network of Nemesis is all needed to give dramatic reality to the colossal villainy of the principal figure. When isolated, the character of Richard is unrealisable from its offence against an innate sense of retribution. Accordingly Shakespeare projects it into a world of which, in whatever direction we look, retribution is the sole visible pattern; in which, as we are carried along by the movement of the play, the unvarying reiteration of Nemesis has the effect of *giving rhythm to fate.*

The motive force of the whole play is another nemesis: the Life and Death of Richard.

What the action of the play has yielded so far to our investigation has been independent of the central personage: we have now to connect Richard himself with the plot. Although the various Nemesis Actions have been carried on by their own motion and by the force of retribution as a principle of moral government, yet there is not one of them which reaches its goal without at some point of its course receiving an impetus from contact with Richard. Richard is thus the source of movement to the whole drama, communicating his own energy through all parts. It is only fitting that the motive force to this system of nemeses should be itself a grand Nemesis Action, the *Life and Death*, or crime and retribution, *of Richard III.* The hero's rise has been sufficiently treated in the preceding study; it remains to trace his fall.

The fall of Richard: not a shock but a succession of stages.

This fall of Richard is constructed on Shakespeare's favourite plan; its force is measured, not by suddenness and violence, but by protraction and the perception of distinct stages—the crescendo in music as distinguished from the fortissimo. Such a fall is not a mere passage through the air —one shock and then all is over—but a slipping down the face of the precipice, with desperate clingings and consciously increasing impetus: its effect is the one inexhaust-

CHAP. V.

ible emotion of suspense. If we examine the point at which the fall begins we are reminded that the nemesis on Richard is different in its type from the others in the play. These are (like that on Shylock) of the *equality* type, of which the motto is measure for measure: and, with his usual exactness, Shakespeare gives us a turning-point in the precise centre of the play, where, as the Queen's kindred are being borne to their death, we get the first recognition that the general retribution denounced by Margaret has begun to work. But the turning-point of Richard's fate is reserved till long past the centre of the play; his is the nemesis of *sureness*, in which the blow is delayed that it may accumulate force. Not that this turning-point is reserved to the very end; the change of fortune appears just when Richard has *committed himself* to his final crime in the usurpation—the murder of the children—the crime from which his most unscrupulous accomplice has drawn back. The effect of this arrangement is to make the numerous crimes which follow appear to come by necessity; he is 'so far in blood that sin will pluck on sin'; he is forced to go on heaping up his villainies with Nemesis full in his view. This turning-point appears in the simple announcement that 'Dorset has fled to Richmond.' There is an instantaneous change in Richard to an attitude of defence, which is maintained to the end. His first instinct is action: but as soon as we have heard the rapid scheme of measures—most of them crimes—by which he prepares to meet his dangers, then he can give himself up to meditation; and we now begin to catch the significance of what has been announced. The name of Richmond has been just heard for the first time in this play. But as Richard meditates we learn how Henry VI prophesied that Richmond should be a king while he was but a peevish boy. Again, Richard recollects how lately, while viewing a castle in the west, the mayor, who showed him over it, mispronounced its name as 'Richmond'—and he had

Not a nemesis of equality but of sureness.

III. iii. 15.

The turning-point: irony of its delay.

IV. ii. from 46.

from 98.

started, for a bard of Ireland had told him he should not live long after he had seen Richmond. Thus the irony that has given point to all the other retributions in the play is not wanting in the chief retribution of all: Shakespeare compensates for so long keeping the grand nemesis out of sight by thus representing Richard as gradually realising that *the finger of Nemesis has been pointing at him all his life and he has never seen it!* CHAP. V.

From this point fate never ceases to tantalise and mock Richard. He engages in his measures of defence, and with their villainy his spirits begin to recover: *Tantalising mockery in Richard's fate.*

> The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom, iv. iii. 38.
> And Anne my wife hath bid the world good night;

young Elizabeth is to be his next victim, and

> To her I go, a jolly thriving wooer.

Suddenly the Nemesis appears again with the news that Ely, the shrewd bishop he dreads most of all men, is with Richmond, and that Buckingham has raised an army. Again, his defence is completing, and the wooing of Elizabeth—his masterpiece, since it is the second of its kind—has been brought to an issue that deserves his surprised exultation: comp. 49. iv. iii. 45.

> Relenting fool, and shallow, changing woman! iv. iv. 431

Suddenly the Nemesis again interrupts him, and this time is nearer: a puissant navy has actually appeared on the west. And now his equanimity begins at last to be disturbed. He storms at Catesby for not starting, forgetting that he has given him no message to take. More than this, a little further on *Richard changes his mind!* Through the rest of the long scene destiny is openly playing with him, giving him just enough hope to keep the sense of despair warm. Messenger follows messenger in hot haste: Richmond is on the seas—Courtenay has risen in Devonshire—the Guildfords are up in Kent.—But Buckingham's army is dis- *His equanimity affected.* iv. iv. 444. 540.

CHAP. V.

persed.—But Yorkshire has risen.—But, a gleam of hope, the Breton navy is dispersed—a triumph, Buckingham is taken.—Then, finally, Richmond has landed! The suspense is telling upon Richard. In this scene he strikes a messenger before he has time to learn that he brings good tidings.

v. iii. 2, 5, 8, &c.

When we next see him he wears a false gaiety and scolds his followers into cheerfulness; but with the gaiety go sudden fits of depression:

> Here will I lie to-night;
> But where to-morrow?

v. iii, from 47.

A little later he becomes nervous, and we have the minute attention to details of the man who feels that his all depends upon one cast; he will not sup, but calls for ink and paper to plan the morrow's fight, he examines carefully as to his beaver and his armour, selects White Surrey to ride, and at last calls for wine and *confesses* a change in himself:

> I have not that alacrity of spirit,
> Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have.

Climax of Richard's fate: significance of the apparitions.

Then comes night, and with it the full tide of Nemesis. By the device of the apparitions the long accumulation of crimes in Richard's rise are made to have each its due representation in his fall. It matters not that they are only

v. iii, from 118.

apparitions. Nemesis itself is the ghost of sin: its sting lies not in the physical force of the blow, but in the close *connection* between a sin and its retribution. So Richard's victims rise from the dead only to secure that the weight of each several crime shall lie heavy on his soul in the morrow's doom. This point moreover must not be missed—that the

Significance of Richard's sleep.

climax of his fate comes to Richard in his *sleep*. The supreme conception of resistance to Deity is reached when God is opposed by God's greatest gift, the freedom of the will. God, so it is reasoned, is omnipotent, but God has made man omnipotent in setting no bounds to his will; and God's omnipotence to punish may be met by man's omnipotence to endure. Such is the ancient conception of Pro-

metheus, and such are the reasonings Milton has imagined for his Satan: to whom, though heaven be lost, CHAP. V.

> All is not lost, the unconquerable will . . .
> And courage never to submit or yield.

But when that strange bundle of greatness and littleness which makes up man attempts to oppose with such weapons the Almighty, how is he to provide for those states in which the will is no longer the governing force in his nature; for the sickness, in which the mind may have to share the feebleness of the body, or for the daily suspension of will in sleep? Richard can to the last preserve his will from faltering. But, like all the rest of mankind, he must some time sleep: that which is the refuge of the honest man, when he may relax the tension of daily care, sleep, is to Richard his point of weakness, when the safeguard of invincible will can protect him no longer. It is, then, this weak moment which a mocking fate chooses for hurling upon Richard the whole avalanche of his doom; as he starts into the frenzy of his half-waking soliloquy we see him, as it were, tearing off layer after layer of artificial reasonings with which the will-struggles of a lifetime have covered his soul against the touch of natural remorse. With full waking his will is as strong as ever: but meanwhile his physical nature has been shattered to its depths, and it is only the wreck of Richard that goes to meet his death on Bosworth field.

Remaining stages of the fall.

There is no need to dwell on the further stages of the fall: to the last the tantalising mockery continues. Richard's spirits rise with the ordering of the battle, and there comes the mysterious scroll to tell him he is bought and sold. His spirits rise again as the fight commences, and news comes of Stanley's long-feared desertion. Five times in the battle he has slain his foe, and five times it proves a false Richmond. Thus slowly the cup is drained to its last dregs and Richard dies. The play opened with the picture of peace, the peace which led Richard's turbid soul, no longer finding scope in

v. iii. 303.

v. iii. 342.

v. iv. 11.

i, i, from 1.

CHAP. V. physical warfare, to turn to the moral war of villainy; from that point through all the crowded incidents has raged the tumultuous battle between Will and Nemesis; with Richard's death it ceases, and the play may return to its keynote:

v. v. 40. **Now civil wounds are stopp'd, peace lives again.**

VI.

How Nemesis and Destiny are interwoven in Macbeth.

A further Study in Plot.

THE present study, like the last, is a study in Plot. The last illustrated Shakespeare's grandeur of conception, how a single principle is held firm amidst the intricacies of history, and reiterated in every detail. The present purpose is to give an example of Shakespeare's *subtlety*, and to exhibit the incidents of a play bound together not by one, but by three, distinct threads of connection—or, if a technical term may be permitted, three Forms of Dramatic Action—all working harmoniously together into a design equally involved and symmetrical. One of these forms is Nemesis; the other two are borrowed from the ancient Drama: it thus becomes necessary to digress for a moment, in order to notice certain differences between the ancient and modern Drama, and between the ancient and modern thought of which the Drama is the expression.

Macbeth as a study of subtlety in Plot.

Its three-fold action.

In the ancient Classical Drama the main moral idea underlying its action is the idea of Destiny. The ancient world recognised Deity, but their deities were not supreme in the universe; Zeus had gained his position by a revolution, and in his turn was to be overthrown by revolution; there was thus, in ancient conception, behind Deity a yet higher force to which Deity itself was subject. The supreme force of the universe has by a school of modern thought been defined as a stream of tendency in things not ourselves making

In the passage from ancient to modern, Destiny changes into Providence.

CHAP. VI. for righteousness: if we attempt to adapt this formula to the ideas of antiquity the difficulty will be in finding anything to substitute for the word 'righteousness.' Sometimes the sum of forces in the universe did seem, in the conception of the ancients, to make for righteousness, and Justice became the highest law. At other times the world seemed to them governed by a supernatural Jealousy, and human prosperity was struck down for no reason except that it was prosperity. In such philosophy as that of Lucretius, again, the tendency of all things was towards Destruction; while in the handling of legends such as that of Hippolytus there is a suggestion of a dark interest to ancient thought in conceiving Evil itself as an irresistible force. It appears, then, that the ancient mind had caught the idea of *force* in the universe, without adding to it the further idea of a motive by which that force was guided: *blind* fate was the governing power over all other powers. With this simple conception of force as ruling the world, modern thought has united as a motive righteousness or law: the transition from ancient to modern thought may be fairly described by saying that Destiny has become changed into Providence as the supreme force of the universe. The change may be well illustrated by comparing the ancient and modern conception of Nemesis. To ancient thought Nemesis was simply one phase of Destiny; the story of Polycrates has been quoted in a former study to illustrate how Nemesis appeared to the Greek mind as capricious a deity as Fortune, a force that might at any time, heedless of desert, check whatever happiness was high enough to attract its attention. But in modern ideas Nemesis and justice are strictly associated: Nemesis may be defined as the artistic side of justice.

The change reflected in ancient and modern Nemesis.

So far as Nemesis then is concerned, it has, in modern thought, passed altogether out of the domain of Destiny and been absorbed into the domain of law: it is thus fitted to be one of the regular forms into which human history may be

represented as falling, in harmony with our modern moral conceptions. But even as regards Destiny itself, while the notion as a whole is out of harmony with the modern notion of law and Providence as ruling forces of the world, yet certain minor phases of Destiny as conceived by antiquity have survived into modern times and been found not irreconcilable with moral law. Two of these minor phases of Destiny are, it will be shown, illustrated in *Macbeth*: and we may thus take as a general description of its plot, the interweaving of Destiny with Nemesis. CHAP. VI.

Nemesis and Destiny interwoven in the plot of Macbeth.

That the career of Macbeth is an example of Nemesis needs only to be stated. As in the case of *Richard III*, we have the rise and fall of a leading personage; the rise is a crime of which the fall is the retribution. Nemesis has just been defined as the artistic aspect of justice; we have in previous studies seen different artistic elements in different types of Nemesis. Sometimes, as with Richard III, the retribution becomes artistic through its sureness; its long delay renders the effect of the blow more striking when it does come. More commonly the artistic element in Nemesis consists in the perfect equality between the sin and its retribution; and of the latter type the Nemesis in the play of *Macbeth* is perhaps the most conspicuous illustration. The rise and fall of Macbeth, to borrow the illustration of Gervinus, constitute a perfect arch, with a turning-point in the centre. Macbeth's series of successes is unbroken till it ends in the murder of Banquo; his series of failures is unbroken from its commencement in the escape of Fleance. Success thus constituting the first half and failure the second half of the play, the transition from the one to the other is the expedition against Banquo and Fleance, in which success and failure are mingled: and this expedition, the keystone to the arch, is found to occupy the exact middle of the middle Act.

The whole plot a Nemesis Action.

of the type of equality.

III. iii.

But this is not all: not only is the play as a whole an

CHAP. VI.

The rise of Macbeth a separate Nemesis action.

example of nemesis, but if its two halves be taken separately they will be found to constitute each a nemesis complete in itself. To begin with the first half, that which is occupied with the rise of Macbeth. If the plan of the play extended no further than to make the hero's fall the retribution upon his rise, it might be expected that the turning-point of the action would be reached upon Macbeth's elevation to the throne. As a fact, however, Macbeth's rise does not stop here; he still goes on to win one more success in his attempt upon the life of Banquo. What the purpose of this prolonged flow of fortune is will be seen when it is considered that this final success of the hero is in reality the source of his ruin. In Macbeth's progress to the attainment of the crown, while of course it was impossible that crimes so violent as his should not incur suspicion, yet circumstances had strangely combined to soothe these suspicions to sleep. But—so Shakespeare manipulates the story—when Macbeth, seated on the throne, goes on to the attempt against Banquo, this additional crime not only brings its own punishment, but has the further effect of unmasking the crimes that have gone before. This important point in the plot is brought out to us in a scene, specially introduced for the purpose, in which Lennox and another lord represent the opinion of the court.

iii. vi. 1.

Lennox. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret further: only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he was dead:
And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late;
Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance kill'd,
For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight
In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?

> **Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;**
> **For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive**
> **To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,**
> **He has borne all things well: and I do think**
> **That had he Duncan's sons under his key—**
> **As, an't please heaven, he shall not—they should find**
> **What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.**

Under the bitter irony of this speech we can see clearly enough that Macbeth has been exposed by his *series* of suspicious acts; he has 'done all things well'; and in particular by peculiar resemblances between this last incident of Banquo and Fleance and the previous incident of Duncan and his son. It appears then that Macbeth's last successful crime proves the means by which retribution overtakes all his other crimes; the latter half of the play is needed to develop the steps of the retribution, but, in substance, Macbeth's fall is latent in the final step of his rise. Thus the first half of the play, that which traces the rise of Macbeth, is a complete Nemesis Action—a career of sins in which the last sin secures the punishment of all.

The fall of Macbeth a separate Nemesis Action.

The same reasoning applies to the latter half of the play: the fall of Macbeth not only serves as the retribution for his rise, but further contains in itself a crime and its nemesis complete. What Banquo is to the first half of the play Macduff is to the latter half; the two balance one another as, in the play of *Julius Cæsar*, Cæsar himself is balanced by Antony; and Macduff comes into prominence upon Banquo's death as Antony upon the fall of Cæsar. Now Macduff, when he finally slays Macbeth, is avenging not only Scotland, but also his own wrongs; and the tyrant's crime against Macduff, with its retribution, just gives unity to the second half of the play, in the way in which the first half was made complete by the association between Macbeth and Banquo, from their joint encounter with the Witches on to the murder of Banquo as a consequence of the Witches' prediction. Accordingly we find that no sooner has Macbeth, by the appearance of the

iii. i. 57–72.

CHAP. VI. Ghost at the banquet, realised the turn of fate, than his first thoughts are of Macduff:

iii. iv. 128. *Macbeth.* How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?
Lady M. Did you send to him, sir?
Macbeth. I hear it by the way; but I will send.

When the Apparitions bid Macbeth 'beware Macduff,' he answers,

iv. i. 74. Thou hast harp'd my fear aright!

iv. i, from 139. On the vanishing of the Apparition Scene, the first thing that happens is the arrival of news that Macduff has fled to England, and is out of his enemy's power; then Macbeth's bloody thoughts devise a still more cruel purpose of vengeance to be taken on the fugitive's family.

Time, thou anticipatest my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it . . . .
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line.

iv. ii, iii. In succeeding scenes we have this diabolical massacre carried out, and see the effect which the news of it has in rousing
v. vii. 15. Macduff to his revenge; until in the final scene of all he feels that if Macbeth is slain and by no stroke of his, his wife and children's ghosts will for ever haunt him. Thus Macduff's function in the play is to be the agent not only of the grand nemesis which constitutes the whole plot, but also of a nemesis upon a private wrong which occupies the latter half of the play. And, putting our results together, we find that a Nemesis Action is the description alike of the whole plot and of the rise and fall which are its two halves.

The Oracular as one phase of Destiny: its partial revelation. With Nemesis is associated in the play of *Macbeth* Destiny in two distinct phases. The first of these is *the Oracular*. In ancient thought, as Destiny was the supreme governor of the universe, so oracles were the revelation of Destiny; and thus

the term 'the Oracles of God' is appropriately applied to the Bible as the Christian revelation. With the advent of Christianity the oracles became dumb. But the triumph of Christianity was for centuries incomplete; heathen deities were not extirpated, but subordinated to the supernatural personages of the new religion; and the old oracles declined into oracular beings such as witches and wizards, and oracular superstitions, such as magic mirrors, dreams, apparitions—all means of dimly revealing hidden destiny. Shakespeare is never wiser than the age he is pourtraying; and accordingly he has freely introduced witches and apparitions into the machinery of *Macbeth*, though in the principles that govern the action of this, as of all his other plays, he is true to the modern notions of Providence and moral law. An oracle and its fulfilment make up a series of events eminently fitted to constitute a dramatic interest; and no form of ancient Drama and Story is more common than this of the 'Oracular Action.' Its interest may be formulated as Destiny working from mystery to clearness. At the commencement of an oracular story the fated future is revealed indeed, but in a dress of mystery, as when the Athenians are bidden to defend themselves with only wooden walls; but as the story of Themistocles develops itself, the drift of events is throwing more and more light on to the hidden meaning of the oracle, until by the naval victory over the Persians the oracle is at once clear and fulfilled.

A minor form of the Oracular in modern oracular beings.

The Oracular Action: Destiny working from mystery to clearness;

The Oracular Action is so important an element in plot, that it may be worth while to prolong the consideration of it by noting the three principal varieties into which it falls, all of which are illustrated in the play of *Macbeth*. In each case the interest consists in tracing the working of Destiny out of mystery into clearness: the distinction between the varieties depends upon the agency by which Destiny works, and the relation of this agency to the original oracle. In the first variety Destiny is fulfilled by the agency of blind obedience.

(1) *by the agency of blind obedience;*

CHAP. VI. The Spartans, unfortunate in their war with the Messenians, enquire of an oracle, and receive the strange response that they must apply for a general to the Athenians, their hereditary enemies. But they resolve to obey the voice of Destiny, though to all appearance they obey at their peril; and the Athenians mock them by selecting the most unfit subject they can find—a man whose bodily infirmities had excluded him from the military exercises altogether. Yet in the end the faith of the Spartans is rewarded. It had been no lack of generalship that had caused their former defeats, but discord and faction in their ranks; now Tyrtæus turned out to be a lyric poet, whose songs roused the spirit of the Spartans and united them as one man, and when united, their native military talent led them to victory. Thus in its fulfilment the hidden meaning of the oracle breaks out into clearness: and blind obedience to the oracle is the agency by which it has been fulfilled.

(2) *by the agency of free will;* In the second variety the oracle is fulfilled by the agency of indifference and free will: it is neither obeyed nor disobeyed, but ignored. One of the best illustrations is to be found in the plot of Sir Walter Scott's novel, *The Betrothed.* Its heroine, more rational than her age, resists the family tradition that would condemn her to sleep in the haunted chamber; overborne, however, by age and authority, she consents, and the lady of the bloody finger appears to pronounce her doom:

> Widow'd wife, and wedded maid;
> Betrothed, Betrayer, and Betrayed.

This seems a mysterious destiny for a simple and virtuous girl. The faithful attendant Rose declares in a burst of devotion that betrayed her mistress may be, but betrayer never; the heroine herself braces her will to dismiss the foreboding from her thoughts, and resolves that she will not be influenced by it on the one side or on the other. Yet it all comes about. Gratitude compels her to give her hand to the elderly

Constable, who on the very day of betrothal is summoned away to the Crusade, from which, as it appears, he is never to return, leaving his spouse at once a widowed wife and a wedded maid. In the troubles of that long absence, by a perfectly natural series of events, gratitude again leads the heroine to admit to her castle her real deliverer and lover in order to save his life, and in protecting him amidst strange circumstances of suspicion to bid defiance to all comers. Finally the castle is besieged by the royal armies, and the heroine has to hear herself proclaimed a traitor by the herald of England; from this perplexity a deliverance is found only when her best friend saves her by betraying the castle to the king. So every detail in the unnatural doom has been in the most natural manner fulfilled: and the woman by whose action it has been fulfilled has been all the while maintaining the freedom of her will and persistently ignoring the oracle.

(3) *by the agency of opposing will.*

But the supreme interest of the Oracular Action is reached when the oracle is fulfilled by an agency that has all the while set itself to oppose and frustrate it. A simple illustration of this is seen in the Eastern potentate who, in opposition to a prophecy that his son should be killed by a lion, forbad the son to hunt, but heaped upon him every other indulgence. In particular he built him a pleasure-house, hung with pictures of hunting and of wild beasts, on which all that art could do was lavished to compensate for the loss of the forbidden sport. One day the son, chafing at his absence from the manly exercise in which his comrades were at that moment engaged, wandered through his pleasure-house, until, stopping at a magnificient picture of a lion at bay, he began to apostrophise it as the source of his disgrace, and waxing still more angry, drove his fist through the picture. A nail, hidden behind the canvas, entered his hand; the wound festered, and he died. So the measures taken to frustrate the destiny proved the means of fulfilling it. But in this third variety of the Oracular Action the classical illustration is the

CHAP. VI. story of Œdipus: told fully, it presents three examples woven together. Laius of Thebes learns from an oracle that the son about to be born to him is destined to be his murderer; accordingly he refuses to rear the child, and it is cast out to perish. A herdsman rescues the infant, and afterwards disposes of it surreptitiously to the childless wife of Polybus, king of Corinth, keeping the secret of its birth. In due time this Œdipus seeks advice of the oracle as to his future career, and receives the startling response that he is destined to slay his own father. Resolved to frustrate so terrible a fate, he will not return to Corinth, but, as it happens, *takes the road to Thebes*, where he falls in accidentally with Laius, and, in ignorance of his person, quarrels with him and slays him. Now if Laius had not resisted the oracle by casting out the infant, it would have grown up like other sons, and every probability would have been against his committing so terrible a crime as parricide. Again, if the herdsman had not, by sending the child out of the country, sought to bar him against a chance of the dreadful fate prophesied for him, he would have known the person of Laius and spared him. Once more, if Œdipus had not, in opposition to the oracle, avoided his supposed home, Corinth, he would never have gone to Thebes and fallen in with his real father. Three different persons acting separately seek to frustrate a declared destiny, and their action unites in fulfilling it.

The rise of Macbeth an Oracular Action,

The plot of *Macbeth*, both as a whole and in its separate parts, is constructed upon this form of the Oracular Action, in combination with the form of Nemesis. The play deals with the rise and fall of Macbeth: the rise, and the fall, and again the two taken together, present each of them an example of an Oracular Action. Firstly, the former half of the play, the rise of Macbeth, taken by itself, consists in an oracle and its fulfilment—the Witches' promise of the crown and the gradual steps by which the crown is attained. Amongst the three varieties of the Oracular Action we have

just distinguished, the present example wavers between the first and the second. After his first excitement has passed away, Macbeth resolves that he will have nothing to do with the temptation that lurked in the Witches' words; in his disjointed meditation we hear him saying: *varying between the second and first type.*

> If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me — i. iii. 143.
> Without my stir;

and again:

> Come what come may, — i. iii. 146.
> Time and the hour runs through the roughest day;

in which last speech the very rhyming may, according to Shakespeare's subtle usage, be pointed to as marking a mind made up. So far then we appear to be following an Oracular Action of the second type, that of indifference and ignoring. But in the very next scene the proclamation of a Prince of Cumberland—that is, of an heir-apparent like our Prince of Wales—takes away Macbeth's 'chance':

> *Macb.* [*Aside*]. The prince of Cumberland! that is a step — i. iv. 48.
> On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
> For in my way it lies.

He instantly commits himself to the evil suggestion, and thus changes the type of action to the first variety, that in which the oracle is fulfilled by the agency of obedience.

Similarly Macbeth's fall, taken by itself, constitutes an Oracular Action, consisting as it does of the ironical promises given by the Apparitions which the Witches raise for Macbeth on his visit to them, and the course of events by which these promises are fulfilled. Its type is a highly interesting example of the first variety, that of blind obedience. The responses of the Apparitions lay down impossible conditions, and as long as these conditions are unfulfilled Macbeth is to be secure; he will fall only when one not born of woman shall be his adversary, only when Birnam Wood shall come to Dunsinane. Macbeth trusts blindly to these promises; further he obeys them, so far as a man can be said to obey *The fall an Oracular Action of the first type.* iv. i. 71–100.

CHAP. VI. an oracle which enjoins no command: he obeys in the sense of relying on them, and making that reliance his ground of action. But this reliance of Macbeth on the ironical promises is an agency in fulfilling them in their real meaning. In his reckless confidence he strikes out right and left, and amongst others injures one to whom the description 'not born of woman' applies. In his reliance on the Apparitions he proceeds, when threatened by the English, to *shut himself up in Dunsinane Castle*; but for this fact the English army would not have approached Dunsinane Castle by the route of Birnam Wood, and the incident of the boughs would never have taken place. Thus Macbeth's fate was made to depend upon impossibilities: by his action in reliance on these impossibilities he is all the while giving them occasion to become possible. In this way an ironical oracle comes to be fulfilled by the agency of blind obedience.

iv. i. 144–156.

The whole plot an Oracular Action of the third type.

Thirdly, the rise and fall of Macbeth are so linked together as to constitute the whole plot another example of the Oracular Action. The original oracle given by the Witches on the blasted heath was a double oracle: besides the promise of the thaneships and the crown there was another revelation of destiny, that Banquo was to be lesser than Macbeth and yet greater, that he was to get kings though to be none. In this latter half of the oracle is found the link which binds together the rise and fall of Macbeth. When the first half of the Witches' promise has been fulfilled in his elevation to the throne, Macbeth sets himself to prevent the fulfilment of the second half by his attempt upon Banquo and Fleance. Now we have already seen how this attempt has the effect of drawing attention, not only to itself, but also to Macbeth's other crimes, and proves indeed the foundation of his ruin. Had Macbeth been content with the attainment of the crown, all might yet have been well: the addition of just one more precaution renders all the rest vain. It appears, then, that that

i. iii. 48–50, 62–66.

which binds together the rise and the fall, that which makes the fall the retribution upon the rise, is the expedition against the Banquo family; and the object of this crime is to frustrate the second part of the Witches' oracle. So the original oracle becomes the motive force to the whole play, setting in motion alike the rise and fall of the action. The figure of the whole plot we have taken as a regular arch; its movement might be compared to that terrible incident of mining life known as 'overwinding,' in which the steam engine pulls the heavy cage from the bottom to the top of the shaft, but, instead of stopping then, winds on till the cage is carried over the pulley and dashed down again to the bottom. So the force of the Witches' prediction is not exhausted when it has tempted Macbeth on to the throne, but carries him on to resist its further clauses, and in resisting to bring about the fall by which they are fulfilled. Not only then are the rise and the fall of Macbeth taken separately oracular, but the whole plot, compounded of the two taken together, constitutes another Oracular Action; and the last is of that type in which Destiny is fulfilled by the agency of a will that has been opposing it.

Irony a phase of malignant Destiny.

A second phase of Destiny enters into the plot of *Macbeth*: this is Irony. Etymologically the word means no more than *saying*. Pressing the idea of saying as distinguished from meaning we get at the ordinary signification, ambiguous speech; from which the word widens in its usage to include double-dealing in general, such as the 'irony of Socrates,' his habit of assuming the part of a simple enquirer in order to entangle the pretentious sophists in their own wisdom. The particular extension of meaning with which we are immediately concerned is that by which irony comes to be applied to a double-dealing in Destiny itself; the link between this and the original sense being no doubt the ambiguous wording of oracular responses which has become proverbial. In ancient conception Destiny wavered between justice and

CHAP. VI. malignity; a leading phase of malignant destiny was this Irony or double-dealing; Irony was the laughter or mockery of Fate. It is illustrated in the angry measures of Œdipus for penetrating the mystery that surrounds the murder of Laius in order to punish the crime, impunity for which has brought the plague upon his city: when at last it is made clear that Œdipus himself has been unknowingly the culprit, there arises an irresistible sensation that Destiny has been all the while playing with the king, and using his zeal as a means for working his destruction. In modern thought the supreme force of the universe cannot possibly be represented as malignant. But mockery, though it may not be enthroned in opposition to justice, may yet, without violating modern ideas, be made to appear in the *mode of operation* by which justice is brought about; here mockery is no longer malignant, but simply an index of overpowering force, just as we smile at the helpless stubbornness of a little child, whereas a man's opposition makes us angry. For such a reconciliation of mockery with righteousness we have authority in the imagery of Scripture.

A modified Irony: Justice in a mocking humour.

> Why do the heathen rage?
> And the people imagine a vain thing?
> The kings of the earth set themselves
> And the rulers take counsel together
> Against the Lord
> And against His Anointed:
> Saying, Let us break their bonds,
> And cast away their cords from us.
>
> He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh:
> The Lord shall have them in derision.
>
> Then shall He speak unto them in His wrath;
> And vex them in His sore displeasure.

There could not be a more perfect type of Irony, in that form of it which harmonises with justice, than this picture in three touches, of the busy security of the wicked, of justice pausing to mock their idle efforts, and then with a

burst of wrath and displeasure annihilating their projects at a stroke. CHAP. VI.

In modern thought, then, Irony is Justice in a mocking humour. The mockery that suddenly becomes apparent in the mysterious operations of Providence, and is a measure of their overpowering force, is clearly capable of giving a highly dramatic interest to a train of events, and so is fitted to be a form of dramatic action. The operation of Destiny as exhibited in the plot of *Macbeth* is throughout tinctured with irony: the element of mockery appearing always in this, that apparent checks to Destiny turn out the very means Destiny chooses by which to fulfil itself. Irony of this kind is regularly attached to what I have called the third variety of the Oracular Action, that in which the oracle is fulfilled by the agency of attempts to oppose it; but in the play under consideration the destiny, whether manifesting itself in that type of the Oracular Action or not, is never dissociated from the attitude of mockery to resistance which converts obstacles into stepping-stones. It remains to show how the rise of Macbeth, the fall of Macbeth, and again the rise and the fall taken together, are all of them Irony Actions.

Irony in the plot of Macbeth: obstacles converted into stepping-stones.

The basis of Macbeth's rise is the Witches' promise of the crown. Scarcely has it been given when an obstacle starts up to its fulfilment in the proclamation of Malcolm as heir-apparent. I have already pointed out that it is this very proclamation which puts an end to Macbeth's wavering, and leads him to undertake the treasonable enterprise which only in the previous scene he had resolved he would have nothing to do with. Later in the history a second obstacle appears: the king is slain, but his two sons, this heir-apparent and his brother, escape from Macbeth's clutches and place two lives between him and the fulfilment of his destiny. But, as events turn out, it is this very flight of the princes that, by diverting suspicion to them for a moment, causes Macbeth to

The rise of Macbeth an Irony Action.

ii. iii. 141.

CHAP. VI. be named as Duncan's successor. A conversation in the play itself is devoted to making this point clear.

ii. iv. 22.

Ross. Is 't known who did this more than bloody deed?
Macduff. Those that Macbeth hath slain.
Ross. Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend?
Macduff. They were suborn'd:
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.
Ross. 'Gainst nature still!
Thriftless ambition, that will ravin up
Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
Macduff. He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested.

The fall an Irony Action.

Twice, then, in the course of the rise Destiny allows obstacles to appear only for the sake of using them as an unexpected means of fulfilment. The same mockery marks the fall of the action. The security against a fall promised by the Apparitions to Macbeth had just one drawback—

iv. i. 71.

'beware Macduff'; and we have already had occasion to notice Macbeth's attempt to secure himself against this

iv. ii, &c.

drawback in the completest manner by extirpating the dangerous thane and his family to the last scion of his stock, and also how this cruel purpose succeeded against all but Macduff himself. Now it is to be noted that this attempt against the fulfilment of the destined retribution proves the very source of the fulfilment, without which it would never have come about. For at one point of the story Macduff, the only man who, according to the decrees of Fate, can harm Macbeth, resolves to abandon his vengeance against him. In his over-cautious policy Macduff was unwilling to move without the concurrence of Malcolm the rightful heir.

iv. iii.

In one of the most singular scenes in all Shakespeare Macduff is represented as urging Malcolm to assert his rights, while Malcolm (in reality driven by the general panic

to suspect even Macduff) discourages his attempts, and affects to be a monster of iniquity, surpassing the tyrant of Scotland himself. At last he succeeds in convincing Macduff of his villainies, and in a burst of despair the fate-appointed avenger renounces vengeance. CHAP. VI. iv. iii, from 100.

Macduff. Fit to govern!
No, not to live . . . . Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

Malcolm, it is true, then drops the pretence of villainy, but he does not succeed in reassuring his companion.

Macduff. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once 'Tis hard to reconcile. iv. iij. 138.

At this moment enters Ross with the news of Macbeth's expedition against Fife, and tells how all Macduff's household, 'wife, children, servants, all,' have been cut off 'at one swoop': before the agony of a bereavement like this hesitation flies away for ever.

Gentle heavens, iv. iii. 231.
Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him: if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

The action taken by Macbeth with a view to prevent Macduff's being the instrument of retribution, is brought by a mocking Fate to impel Macduff to his task at the precise moment he had resolved to abandon it.

The plot as a whole an Irony of Action.

Finally, if the rise and the fall be contemplated together as constituting one action, this also will be found animated by the same spirit of irony. The original promise of the Witches, as well as the later promise of the Apparition, had its drawback in the destiny that Banquo was to be lesser than Macbeth and yet greater, to get kings though to be none; and to secure against this drawback is Macbeth's i. iii. 62–66.

CHAP. VI. purpose in his plot against Banquo and Fleance, by which the rival family would be extirpated. The plot only *half succeeds*, and by its half-success contributes to the exactness with which the destiny is fulfilled. Had Macbeth's attempt fully succeeded, Banquo would neither have got kings nor been one; had no such attempt at all been made, then, for anything we see to the contrary in the play, Banquo would have preceded his sons on the throne, and so again the oracle would not have been fulfilled which made Banquo lesser than Macbeth. But by the mixture of success and failure in Macbeth's plot Banquo is slain before he can attain the crown, and Fleance lives to give a royal house to Scotland. Once more, then, mockery appears a characteristic of the Destiny that finds in human resistance just the one peculiar device needed for effecting the peculiar distribution of fortune it has promised.

Summary. Such is the subtlety with which Shakespeare has constructed this plot of *Macbeth*, and interwoven in it Nemesis and Destiny. To outward appearance it is connected with the rise and fall of a sinner: the analysis that searches for inner principles of construction traces through its incidents three forms of action working harmoniously together, by which the rise and fall of Macbeth are so linked as to exhibit at once a crime with its Nemesis, an Oracle with its fulfilment, and the Irony which works by the agency of that which resists it. Again the separate halves of the play, the rise and the fall of the hero, are found to present each the same triple pattern as the whole. Once more, with the career of Macbeth are associated the careers of Banquo and Macduff, and these also reflect the threefold spirit. Macbeth's rise involves Banquo's fall: this fall is the subject of oracular prediction, it is the starting-point of nemesis on Macbeth, and it has an element of irony in the fact that Banquo *all but* escaped. With Macbeth's fall is bound up Macduff's rise; this also had been predicted in oracles, it is an agency

in the main nemesis, and Macduff's fate has the irony that he *all but* perished at the outset of his mission. Through all the separate interests of this elaborate plot, the three forms of action—Nemesis, the Oracular, Irony—are seen perfectly harmonised and perfectly complete. And over all this is thrown the supernatural interest of the Witches, who are agents of nemesis working by the means of ironical oracles.

VII.

MACBETH, LORD AND LADY.

A Study in Character-Contrast.

CHAP. VII.

CONTRASTS of character form one of the simplest elements of dramatic interest. Such contrasts are often obvious; at other times they take definitiveness only when looked at from a particular point of view. The contrast of character which it is the object of the present study to sketch rests upon a certain distinction which is one of the fundamental ideas in the analysis of human nature—the distinction between the outer life of action and the inner life of our own experience. The recognition of the two is as old as the *Book of Proverbs*, which contrasts the man that ruleth his spirit with the man that taketh a city. The heathen oracle, again, opened out to an age which seemed to have exhausted knowledge a new world for investigation in the simple command, Know thyself. The Stoics, who so despised the busy vanity of state cares, yet delighted to call their ideal man a king; and their particular tenet is universalised by Milton when he says:

The antithesis of the outer and inner life.

> Therein stands the office of a king,
> His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
> That for the public all this weight he bears:
> Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
> Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king.

And the modern humourist finds the idea indispensable for his pourtrayal of character and experience. 'Sir,' says one of Thackeray's personages, 'a distinct universe walks about

under your hat and under mine . . . You and I are but a pair of infinite isolations with some fellow-islands more or less near to us.' And elsewhere the same writer says that 'each creature born has a little kingdom of thought of his own, which it is a sin in us to invade.'

This antithesis of the practical and inner life is so accepted a commonplace of the pulpit and of the essayist on morals and culture that it may seem tedious to expound it. But for the very reason that it belongs to all these spheres, and that these spheres overlap, the two sides of the antithesis are not kept clearly distinct, nor are the terms uniformly used in the same sense. For the present purpose the exact distinction is between the outer world, the world of practical action, the sphere of making and doing, in which we mingle with our fellow men, join in their enterprises, and influence them to our ideas, in which we investigate nature and society, or seek to build up a fabric of power: and, on the other hand, the inner intellectual life, in which our powers as by a mirror are turned inwards upon ourselves, finding a field for enterprise in self-discipline and the contest with inherited notions and passions, exploring the depths of our consciousness and our mysterious relations with the unseen, until the thinker becomes familiar with strange situations of the mind and at ease in the presence of its problems. The antithesis is thus not at all the same as that between worldly and religious, for the inner life may be cultivated for evil: self-anatomy, as Shelley says,

> Shall teach the will
> Dangerous secrets: for it tempts our powers,
> Knowing what must be thought and may be done,
> Into the depth of darkest purposes.

Still less is it the antithesis between intellectual and commonplace; the highest intellectual powers find employment in practical life. The various mental and moral qualities belong to both spheres, but have a different meaning for each.

CHAP. VII. Practical experience is a totally different thing from what the religious thinker means by his 'experience.' The discipline given by the world often consists in the dulling of those powers which self-discipline seeks to develope. Knowledge of affairs, with its rapid and instinctive grasp, is often possessed in the highest degree by the man who is least of all men versed in the other knowledge, which could explain and analyse the processes by which it operated. And every observer is struck by the different forms which courage takes in the two spheres, courage in action, and courage where nothing can be done and men have only to endure and wait. Macaulay in a well-known passage contrasts the active and passive courage as one of the distinctions between the West and the East.

> An European warrior, who rushes on a battery of cannon with a loud hurrah, will sometimes shriek under the surgeon's knife, and fall into an agony of despair at the sentence of death. But the Bengalee, who would see his country overrun, his house laid in ashes, his children murdered or dishonoured, without having the spirit to strike one blow, has yet been known to endure torture with the firmness of Mucius, and to mount the scaffold with the steady step and even pulse of Algernon Sidney.

The two lives are complete, each with its own field, its own qualities, culture, and fruit.

The antithesis an element in Character-Interpretation.

It is obvious that relation to these two lives will have a very great effect in determining individual character. In the same man the two sides of experience may be most unequally developed; an intellectual giant is often a child in the affairs of the world, and a moral hero may be found in the person of some bedridden cripple. On the other hand, to some the inner life is hardly known: familiar perhaps with every other branch of knowledge they go down to their graves strangers to themselves.

> All things without, which round about we see,
> We seek to know and how therewith to do;
> But that whereby we reason, live, and be
> Within ourselves, we strangers are thereto.

We seek to know the moving of each sphere,
And the strange cause of the ebbs and flows of Nile:
But of that clock within our breasts we bear,
The subtle motions we forget the while.

We, that acquaint ourselves with every zone,
And pass both tropics, and behold each pole,
When we come home, are to ourselves unknown,
And unacquainted still with our own soul.

The antithesis then between the outer and inner life will be among the ideas which lie at the root of Character-Interpretation.

In a simple age it coincides with the distinction of the sexes.

When the idea is applied to an age like that of Macbeth, the antithesis between the two lives almost coincides with the distinction of the sexes: amid the simple conditions of life belonging to such an age the natural tendency would be for genius in men to find scope in the outer and practical world, while genius in women would be restricted to the inner life. And this is the idea I am endeavouring to work out in the present study:—that the key to Shakespeare's portraiture of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth will be found in regarding the two as illustrations of the outer and inner life. Both possess force in the highest degree, but the two have been moulded by the exercise of this force in different spheres; their characters are in the play brought into sharp contrast by their common enterprise, and the contrast of practical and intellectual mind is seen maintained through the successive stages of their descent to ruin.

The antithesis the key to the characters of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

Macbeth as the practical man.

Thus Macbeth is essentially the practical man, the man of action, of the highest experience, power, and energy in military and political command, accustomed to the closest connection between willing and doing. He is one who in another age would have worked out the problem of free trade, or unified Germany, or engineered the Suez Canal. On the other hand, he has concerned himself little with things transcendental; he is poorly disciplined in thought and goodness; prepared for any emergency in which there is anything

CHAP. VII. to be *done*, yet a mental crisis or a moral problem afflicts him with the shock of an unfamiliar situation. This is by no means a generally accepted view: amongst a large number of readers the traditional conception of Macbeth lingers as a noble disposition dragged down by his connection with the coarser nature of his wife. According to the view here suggested the nobility of Macbeth is of the flimsiest and most tawdry kind. The lofty tone he is found at times assuming means no more than virtuous education and surroundings. When the purely practical nature is examined in reference to the qualities which belong to the intellectual life, the result is not a blank but ordinariness: the practical nature will reflect current thought and goodness as they appear from the outside. So Macbeth's is the morality of inherited notions, retained just because he has no disposition to examine them; he has all the practical man's distrust of wandering from the beaten track of opinion, which gives the working politician his prejudice against doctrinaires, and has raised up stout defenders of the Church amongst men whose lives were little influenced by her teaching. And the traditionary morality is more than merely retained. When the seed fell into stony ground forthwith it sprang up *because* it had no deepness of earth: the very shallowness of a man's character may lend emphasis to his high professions, just as, on the other hand, earnestness in its first stage often takes the form of hesitation. So Macbeth's practical genius takes in strongly what it takes in at all, and gives it out vigorously. But that the nobility has gone beyond the stage of passive recognition, that it has become absorbed into his inner nature, there is not a trace; on the contrary, it is impossible to follow Macbeth's history far without abundant evidence that real love of goodness for its own sake, founded on intelligent choice or deep affection, has failed to root a single fibre in his nature.

His nobility conventional.

First, we have the opportunity of studying Macbeth's

character in the analysis given of it in the play itself by the one person who not only saw Macbeth in his public life, but knew also the side of him hidden from the world.

Lady Macbeth's analysis of her husband's character.

Lady Macbeth. I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way. i. v. 16 31.

I believe that this phrase, the 'milk of human kindness,' divorced from its context and become the most familiar of all commonplaces, has done more than anything else towards giving a false twist to the general conception of Macbeth's character. The words *kind, kindness* are amongst the most difficult words in Shakespeare. The wide original signification of the root, *natural, nature*, still retained in the noun *kind*, has been lost in the adjective, which has been narrowed by modern usage to one sort of naturalness, tender-heartedness; though in a derivative form the original sense is still familiar to modern ears in the expression 'the *kindly* fruits of the earth.' In Elizabethan English, however, the root signification still remained in all usages of *kind* and its derivatives. In Schmidt's analysis of the adjective, two of its four significations agree with the modern use, the other two are 'keeping to nature, natural,' and 'not degenerate and corrupt, but such as a thing or person ought to be.' Shakespeare delights to play upon the two senses of this family of words: tears of joy are described as a 'kind overflow of kindness'; the Fool says of Regan that she will use Lear 'kindly,' i. e. according to her nature; 'the worm will do his kind,' i. e. bite. How far the word can wander from its modern sense is seen in a phrase of the present play, 'at your kind'st leisure,' where it is simply equivalent to 'convenient.' Still more will the wider signification of the word obtain, when it is associated with the word *human*; 'humankind' is still an expression for human nature, and the sense of the passage we are considering would be more obvious if the whole phrase were printed as one word, not

Much Ado, i. i. 26. *Lr.* i. v. 15. *Ant. and Cleop.* v. ii. 264. ii. i. 24.

CHAP. VII.

'human kindness,' but 'humankind-ness':—that shrinking from what is not natural, which is a marked feature of the practical nature. The other part of the clause, ***milk*** of humankind-ness, no doubt suggests absence of hardness: but it equally connotes natural, inherited, traditional feelings, imbibed at the mother's breast. The whole expression of Lady Macbeth, then, I take to attribute to her husband an instinctive tendency to shrink from whatever is in any way unnatural. That this is the true sense further appears, not only from the facts—for nothing in the play suggests that Macbeth, 'Bellona's bridegroom,' was distinguished by kindness in the modern sense—but from the context. The form of Lady Macbeth's speech makes the phrase under discussion a summing up of the rest of her analysis, or rather a general text which she proceeds to expand into details. Not one of these details has any connection with tender-heartedness: on the other hand, if put together the details do amount to the sense for which I am contending, that Macbeth's character is a type of commonplace morality, the shallow unthinking and unfeeling man's lifelong hesitation between God and Mammon.

i. ii. 54.

> Thou would'st be great;
> Art not without ambition, but without
> The illness should attend it: what thou would'st highly
> That would'st thou holily; would'st not play false,
> And yet would'st wrongly win: thou'ldst have, great Glamis,
> That which cries 'Thus thou must do, if thou have it,
> And that which *rather thou dost fear to do*
> *Than wishest should be undone.*'

If the delicate balancing of previous clauses had left any doubt as to the meaning, the last two lines remove it, and assert distinctly that Macbeth has no objection to the evil itself, but only a fear of evil measures which must be associated to a practical mind with failure and disgrace. It is striking that at the very moment Lady Macbeth is so meditating, her husband is giving a practical confirmation of her

i. iv. 48–53.

description in its details as well as its general purport. He had resolved to take no steps himself towards the fulfilment of the Witches' prophecy, but to leave all to chance; then the proclamation of Malcolm, removing all apparent chance of succession, led him to change his mind and entertain the scheme of treason and murder: the words with which he surrenders himself seems like an echo of his wife's analysis. CHAP. VII

i. iii. 143. 146.

> Stars, hide your fires;
> Let not light see my black and deep desires:
> The eye wink at the hand; *yet let that be*
> *Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.*

Macbeth's soliloquy: of an eminently practical character.

But we are not left to descriptions of Macbeth by others. We have him self-displayed; and that in a situation so framed that if there were in him the faintest sympathy with goodness it must here be brought into prominence. Macbeth has torn himself away from the banquet, and, his mind full of the desperate danger of the treason he is meditating, he ponders over the various motives that forbid its execution. A strong nobility would even amid incentives *to* crime feel the attraction of virtue and have to struggle against it; but surely the weakest nobility, when facing motives *against* sin, would be roused to some degree of virtuous passion. Yet, if Macbeth's famous soliloquy be searched through and through, not a single thought will be found to suggest that he is regarding the deep considerations of sin and retribution in any other light than that of immediate practical consequences. First, there is the thought of the sureness of retribution even in this world. It may be true that hope of heaven and fear of hell are not the highest of moral incentives, but at least they are a degree higher than the thought of worldly prosperity and failure; Macbeth however is willing to take his chance of the next world if only he can be guaranteed against penalties in this life.

i. vii. 1–28.

> If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
> It were done quickly: if the assassination

CHAP. VII.

Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
With his surcease success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all here.
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'ld jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgement here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice
To our own lips.

So far he has reached no higher consideration, in reference to treason and murder, than the fear that he may be suggesting to others to use against himself the weapon he is intending for Duncan. Then his thoughts turn to the motives against crime which belong to the softer side of our nature.

He's here in double trust,
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity—

At all events it is clear this is no case of a man blinded for the moment to the emotions which resist crime; and as we hear him passing in review kinship, loyalty, hospitality, pity, we listen for the burst of remorse with which he will hurl from him the treachery he had been fostering. But, on the contrary, his thoughts are still practical, and the climax to which this survey of motives is to lead up is no more than the effect they will have on others: pity

Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.

And then he seems to regret that he cannot find more incentives to his villainy.

> I have no spur
> To prick the sides of my intent, but only
> Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
> And falls on the other.

So Macbeth's searching self-examination on topics of sin and retribution, amid circumstances specially calculated to rouse compunction, results in thoughts not more noble than these—that murder is a game which two parties can play at, that heartlessness has the effect of drawing general attention, that ambition is apt to defeat its own object.

Macbeth rises with external deeds and sinks with internal conflicts.

Again: that Macbeth's union of superficial nobility with real moral worthlessness is connected with the purely practical bent of his mind will be the more evident the wider the survey which is taken of his character and actions. It may be observed that Macbeth's spirits always rise with evil deeds: however he may have wavered in the contemplation of crime, its execution strings him up to the loftiest tone. This is especially clear in the Dagger Scene, and in the scene in which he darkly hints to his wife the murder of Banquo, which is in a brief space to be in actual perpetration. As he feels the moment of crime draw near, his whole figure seems to dilate, the language rises, and the imagery begins to flow. Like a poet invoking his muse, Macbeth calls on seeling night to scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day. He has an eye to dramatic surroundings for his dark deeds.

ii. i, from 31; and iii. ii, from 39.

> Now, o'er the one half-world
> Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
> The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates
> Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,
> Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
> Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
> With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
> Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
> Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
> The very stones prate of my whereabout,
> *And take the present horror from the time,*
> *Which now suits with it.*

The man who had an hour or two before been driven from

CHAP. VII.

the table of his guests by the mere thought of a crime moves to the deed itself with the exalted language of a Hebrew prophet. On the other hand, in his spiritual struggles there is a simpleness that sometimes suggests childishness. His trouble is that he could not say 'Amen' when the sleepers cried 'God bless us'; his conscience seems a voice outside him; finally, the hardened warrior dare not return to the darkness and face the victim he had so exultingly done to death.

ii. ii. 31.

ii. ii. 35–46.

Macbeth, then, is the embodiment of one side of the antithesis with which we started; his is pre-eminently the practical nature, moulded in a world of action, but uninfluenced by the cultivation of the inner life. Yet he is not perfect as a man of action: for the practical cannot reach its perfection without the assistance of the inner life. There are two flaws in Macbeth's completeness. For one, his lack of training in thought has left him without protection against the superstition of his age. He is a passive prey to supernatural imaginings. He himself tells us he is a man whose senses would cool to hear a night-shriek, and his fell of hair rouse at a dismal treatise. And we see throughout the play how he never for an instant doubts the reality of the supernatural appearances: a feature the more striking from its contrast with the scepticism of Lady Macbeth, and the hesitating doubt of Banquo. Again: no active career can be without its periods when action is impossible, and it is in such periods that the training given by the intellectual life makes itself felt, with its self-control and passive courage. All this Macbeth lacks: in suspense he has no power of self-restraint. When we come to trace him through the stages of the action we shall find that one of these two flaws springing out of Macbeth's lack of the inner life, his superstition and his helplessness in suspense, is at every turn the source of his betrayal.

Two flaws in Macbeth as an embodiment of the practical: his superstition;

v. v. 10.

and his helplessness under suspense.

e. g. iii. iv. 60; i. iii. 107, 122. iii. i. 6.

compare i. iii. 137, and iii. ii. 16.

In the case of Lady Macbeth, the old-fashioned view of

her as a second Clytæmnestra has long been steadily giving way before a conception higher at least on the intellectual side. The exact key to her character is given by regarding her as the antithesis of her husband, and an embodiment of the inner life and its intellectual culture so markedly wanting in him. She has had the feminine lot of being shut out from active life, and her genius and energy have been turned inwards; her soul—like her 'little hand'—is not hardened for the working-day world, but is quick, delicate, sensitive. She has the keenest insight into the characters of those around her. She is accustomed to moral loneliness and at home in mental struggles. She has even solved for herself some of their problems. In the very crisis of Duncan's murder she gives utterance to the sentiment:

CHAP. VII.

Lady Macbeth as an embodiment of the inner life.

v. i. 58.

> the sleeping and the dead
> Are but as pictures. — II. ii. 53.

When we remember that she must have started with the superstitions of her age such an expression, simple enough in modern lips, opens up to us a whole drama of personal history: we can picture the trembling curiosity, the struggle between will and quivering nerves, the triumph chequered with awe, the resurrection of doubts, the swayings between natural repulsion and intellectual thirst, the growing courage and the reiterated victories settling down into calm principle. Accordingly, Lady Macbeth has won the grand prize of the inner life: in the kingdom of her personal experience her WILL is unquestioned king. It may seem strange to some readers that Lady Macbeth should be held up as the type of the inner life, so associated is that phrase to modern ears with the life fostered by religion. But the two things must not be confused—religion and the sphere in which religion is exercised. 'The kingdom of God is within you,' was the proclamation of Christ, but the world within *may* be subjugated to other kings than God. Mental discipline and perfect self-control, like that of Lady Macbeth,

CHAP. VII.

would hold their sway over evil passions, but they would also be true to her when she chose to contend against goodness, and even against the deepest instincts of her feminine nature. This was ignored in the old conception of the character, and a struggle *against* the softer side of her nature was mistaken for its total absence. But her intellectual culture must have quickened her finer sensibilities at the same time that it built up a will strong enough to hold them down; nor is the subjugation so perfect but that a sympathetic insight can throughout trace a keen delicacy of nature striving to assert itself. In particular, when she calls upon the spirits that tend on mortal thoughts to unsex and fill her from crown to toe with direst cruelty, she is thrilling all over with feminine repugnance to the bloody enterprise, which nevertheless her royal will insists upon her undertaking. Lady Macbeth's career in the play is one long mental civil war; and the strain ends, as such a strain could only end, in madness.

A struggle against not absence of the softer qualities.

i. v. 41.

The Character-Contrast traced through the action.

Such is the general conception of Lord and Lady Macbeth from the point of view of the antithesis between the outer and inner life. We have now to turn from character to action, and trace the contrasted pair through the stages of their common career.

Situation at the opening of the play.

The two opposing natures have been united in a happy marriage, the happier because a link between characters so forceful and so antithetic, if it held at all, must be a source of interest: the dark tragedy of this unhappy pair is softened by the tenderness of demeanour which appears on both sides. Another source of marriage happiness is added: there is not a trace of self-seeking in Lady Macbeth. Throughout the play she is never found meditating upon what she is to gain by the crown; wife-like, she has no sphere but the career of her husband. In a picture of human characters, great in their scale, overwhelmed in moral ruin, the question of absorbing interest is the commencement of the descent, and

compare i. v. 55–60; i. vii. 38; iii. ii. 27, 29, 36, 45; iii. iv. 141.

The original impulse to evil came from Macbeth.

the source from which the impulse to evil has come. This, in the present case, Shakespeare has carefully hidden from us: before the play opens the essential surrender of spirit has taken place, and all that we are allowed to see is its realisation in life and fact. If, however, we use the slight material afforded us for speculation on this point, it would appear that the original choice for evil has for both been made by Macbeth. In the partnership of man and wife it is generally safe to assume that the initiative of action has come from the husband, if nothing appears to the contrary. In the present case we are not left to assumptions, Lady Macbeth distinctly speaks of her husband as first breaking to her the enterprise of treacherous ambition. CHAP. VII.

i. vii. 48.

> What beast was't, then,
> Which made you break this enterprise to me
> . . . . . Nor time nor place
> Did then adhere, and yet you would make both.

The reference can only be to a period before the commencement of the play; and the general drift of the passage suggests that it was no mere choice, made by Macbeth with deliberation during which he would be open to conviction, but an impulse of uncontrollable passion that it would have been vain for his wife to resist, supposing that she had had the desire to resist it—so uncontrollable, indeed, that it appears to Lady Macbeth stronger than the strongest of feminine passions, a mother's love.

i. vii. 54.

> I have given suck, and know
> How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
> I would, while it was smiling in my face,
> Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
> And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
> Have done to this.

The only sense in which Lady Macbeth can be pronounced the ruin of her husband is that her firm nature holds him in the path to which he has committed them both, and will not

CHAP. VII. allow his fatal faltering to lose both the virtue he has renounced and the price for which he has bartered it. Denied by her feminine position, the possibility—even if she had had the desire—of directing the common lot for good, she has recognised before we make her acquaintance that this lot has been cast for evil, and she is too well-trained in self-knowledge to attempt the self-deception her husband tries to keep up. And to this evil lot she applies her full force. Her
i. vii. 54. children have died, and this natural outlet for passion is wanting; the whole of her energy is brought to bear upon her husband's ambition, and she is waiting only an occasion for concentrating her powers upon some definite project.

Four stages in the action. With such mutual relations between the hero and the heroine the play opens: we are to watch the contrasted characters through the successive stages of the Temptation, the Deed, the Concealment, the Nemesis.

The Temptation. The Temptation accosts the two personages when separated from one another, and we thus have the better opportunity of watching the different forms it assumes in adapting itself to the different characters. The expedition, which has separated Macbeth from his wife, is one which must have led him to brood over his schemes of ambition. Certainly it exhibits to him an example of treason and shows him the weakness of his sovereign. Probably he sees events shaping in a direction that suggests opportunity; he may have known that the king must pass in the direction of his castle, or in some other way may have anticipated a royal visit; at all events the king's intimation of this visit in the play itself—

i. iv. 42. From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you,—

does not look like a first mention of it. To a mind so pre-
i. iii. 38–78. pared the supernatural solicitation brings a shock of temptation; and as the Witches in their greeting reach the promise,

'Thou shalt be KING hereafter,' Macbeth gives a start that CHAP. VII.
astonishes Banquo:

> Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
> Things that do sound so fair?

To Banquo this prediction of the Witches seems no more than curious; for it must be remembered that Macbeth's position in the kingdom was not such as to exclude hope of succession to the crown, though the hope was a remote one. But Macbeth's start tells a tale of his inner thoughts at the time. This alone should be sufficient to vindicate Shakespeare from the charge sometimes brought against him of turning a great character from virtue to vice by demoniac agency; his is the higher conception that a soul which has commenced the surrender to evil will find in the powers of darkness agencies ready to expedite its descent, it matters not what form these agencies assume. Macbeth has been for years playing with the idea of treason, while never bracing himself up to the point of acting it: suddenly the thought he fancied so safe within his bosom appears outside him in tangible form, gleaming at him in the malignant glances of recognition the Witches are casting at him. To a mind utterly undefended by culture against superstitious terror this objective presentation of his own thought proves a Rubicon of temptation which he never attempts to recross. On Lady Macbeth the supernatural incident makes not the slightest impression of any kind; we see her reading her husband's excited account of the interview with the most deliberate calmness, weighing its suggestions only with reference to the question how it can be used upon her husband. To her temptation comes with the suggestion of *opportunity*. The messenger enters during her quiet meditation: I. v. 1–55.

> *Mess.* The king comes here to-night.
> *Lady M.* Thou 'rt mad to say it!

The shock that passes over her is like the shock of chemical change. In an instant her whole nature is strung up to

CHAP. VII.

a single end; the long-expected occasion for the concentration of a whole life's energy upon a decisive stroke is come. So rapidly does her imagination move that she sees the deed before her as already done, and, as she casts her eyes upwards, the very ravens over her head seem to be croaking the fatal entrance of Duncan under her battlements.

The meeting afterwards. i. v, from 55; i. vii.

The stage of Temptation cannot be considered complete without taking in that important section of the play which intervenes between the meeting of the two personages after their separate temptations and the accomplishment of the treason. This is essentially a period of suspense, and accordingly exhibits Macbeth at his weakest. As he enters his castle his tell-tale face is as a book where men may read strange matters; and his utter powerlessness of self-control throws upon his wife's firm will the strongest of all strains, that of infusing her own tenacity into a vacillating ally. I have already dealt with the point at which Macbeth's suspense becomes intolerable, and he leaves the supper-table; and I have drawn attention to the eminently practical nature of his thoughts even at this crisis. The scene which follows, when his wife labours to hold him to the enterprise he has undertaken, illustrates perhaps better than any other incident in the play how truly this practical bent is the key to Macbeth's whole character. At first he takes high ground, and rests his hesitation on considerations of gratitude. Lady Macbeth appeals to consistency, to their mutual love, and, her anger beginning to rise at this wavering of will in a critical moment, she taunts her husband with cowardice. Then it is that Macbeth, irritated in his turn, speaks the noble words that have done so much to gain him a place in the army of martyrs to wifely temptations.

> Prithee, peace:
> I dare do all that may become a man;
> Who dares do more is none.

But it is difficult to share Macbeth's self-deception long. At his wife's reminder how he had been the one to first moot the undertaking, and swear to it in spite of overwhelming obstacles, already the noble attitude looks more like the sour grapes morality of the man who begins to feel indignation against sin at the precise moment when the sin becomes dangerous. And the whole truth comes sneaking out at Macbeth's next rejoinder: 'If we should fail?' Here is the critical point of the scene. At its beginning Macbeth is for abandoning the treason, at its end he prepares for his task of murder with animation: where does the change come? *The practical man is nerved by having the practical details supplied to him.* Lady Macbeth sketches a feasible scheme: how that the King will be wearied, his chamberlains can by means of the banquet be easily drugged, their confusion on waking can be interpreted as guilt—before she has half done her husband interrupts her with a burst of enthusiasm, and completes her scheme for her. The man who had thought it was manliness that made him shrink from murder henceforward never hesitates till he has plunged his dagger in his sovereign's bosom.

i. vii, from 61.

The Deed. ii. i. 31 to ii. ii.

In the perpetration of the Deed itself we have the woman passing from weakness to strength, the man from strength to weakness. To Lady Macbeth this actual contact with a deed of blood is the severest point of the strain, the part most abhorrent to her more delicate nature. For a single moment she feels herself on the verge of the madness which eventually comes upon her:

> These deeds must not be thought ii. ii. 33.
> After these ways; so, it will make us mad!

And at the beginning of the scene she has been obliged to have recourse to stimulants in order to brace her failing nerves:

> That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold. ii. ii. 1.

CHAP. VII.

And in part the attempt to bring her delicate nature to the repugnant deed does fail. It is clear that, knowing how little her husband could be depended upon, she had intended to have a hand in the murder itself:

i. vii. 69; compare i. v. 68.

> What cannot *you and I* perform upon
> The unguarded Duncan?

But the will which was strong enough to hold down conscience gave way for a moment before an instinct of feminine tenderness:

ii. ii. 13.

> Had he not resembled
> My father as he slept, I had done't.

The superiority, however, of the intellectual mind is seen in this, that it can nerve itself from its own agitation, it can draw strength out of the weakness surrounding it, or out of the necessities of the situation: *must* is the most powerful of spells to a trained will. And so it is that Lady Macbeth rises to the occasion when her husband fails. At first Macbeth in the perpetration of the murder appears in his proper sphere of action, and we have already noticed how the Dagger Soliloquy shows no shrinking, but rather excitement on the side of exultation. The change in him comes with a moment of suspense, caused by the momentary waking of the grooms:

ii. ii. 24.

'I stood and heard them.' With this, no longer sustained by action, he utterly breaks down under the unfamiliar terrors of a fight with his conscience. His prayer sticks in his throat; his thoughts seem so vivid that his wife can hardly tell whether he did not take them for a real voice outside him.

> Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
> You do unbend your noble strength, to think
> So brainsickly of things.

In his agitation he forgets the plan of action, brings away the daggers instead of leaving them with the grooms, and finally dares not return to finish what he has left uncompleted. And accordingly his wife has to make another demand upon her overwrought nature: with one hysterical jest,

> If he do bleed,
> I'll *gild* the faces of the grooms withal,
> For it must seem their *guilt*,

her nature rallies, and the strength derived from the inner life fills up a gap in action where the mere strength of action had failed.

The first Shock of Concealment. ii. iii, from 68.

The Concealment of the murder forms a stage of the action which falls into two different parts: the single effort which faces the first shock of discovery, and the very different strain required to meet the slowly gathering evidence of guilt. In the Scene of the Discovery Macbeth is perfectly at home: energetic action is needed, and he is dealing with men. His acted innocence appears to me better than his wife's; Lady Macbeth goes near to suggesting a personal interest in the crime by her over-anxiety to disclaim it.

> *Macduff.* O Banquo, Banquo,
> Our royal master's murder'd!
> *Lady M.* Woe, alas!
> What, in our house?
> *Banquo.* Too cruel anywhere.

Yet in this scene, as everywhere else, the weak points in Macbeth's character betray him: for one moment he is left to himself, and that moment's suspense ruins the whole episode. In the most natural manner in the world Macbeth had, on hearing the announcement, rushed with Lennox to the scene of the murder. Lennox quitted the chamber of blood first, and for an instant Macbeth was alone, facing the grooms still heavy with their drugged sleep, and knowing that in another moment they would be aroused and telling their tale: the sense of crisis proves too much for him, and under an ungovernable impulse he stabs them. He thus wrecks the whole scheme. How perfectly Lady Macbeth's plan would have served if it had been left to itself is shown by Lennox's account of what he had seen, and how the grooms

> stared, and were distracted; no man's life
> Was to be trusted with them.

CHAP. VII. Nothing, it is true, can be finer than the way in which Macbeth seeks to cover his mistake and announces what he has done. But in spite of his brilliant outburst,

> Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,
> Loyal and neutral, in a moment?

and his vivid word-picture of his supposed sensations, his efforts are in vain, and at the end of his speech we feel that there has arisen in the company of nobles the indescribable effect known as 'a sensation,' and we listen for some one to speak some word that shall be irrevocable. The crisis is
ii. iii. 124. acute, but Lady Macbeth comes to the rescue *and faints!* It matters little whether we suppose the fainting assumed, or that she yields to the agitation she has been fighting against so long. The important point is that she chooses this exact moment for giving way: she holds out to the end of her husband's speech, then falls with a cry for help; there is at once a diversion, and she is carried out. But the crisis
ii. iii. 132. has passed, and a moment's consideration has suggested to the nobles the wisdom of adjourning for a fitter occasion the enquiry into the murder they all suspect: before that occasion
ii. iv. 24–32. arrives the flight of the king's sons has diverted suspicion into an entirely new channel. Lady Macbeth's fainting saved her husband.

The long Strain of Concealment. To convey dramatically the continuous strain of keeping up appearances in face of steadily accumulating suspicion is iii. i. ii. more difficult than to depict a single crisis. Shakespeare manages it in the present case chiefly by presenting Macbeth to us on the eve of an important council, at which the whole truth is likely to come out.

iii. i. 30.

> We hear, our bloody cousins are bestowed
> In England and in Ireland, not confessing
> Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
> With strange invention: but of that to-morrow.

It is enough to note here that Macbeth takes the step—the fatal step, as was pointed out in the last study—of contriving

Banquo's murder simply because he cannot face the suspense of waiting for the morrow, and hearing the defence of the innocent princes made in presence of Banquo, who knows the inducement he had to such a deed. That he feels the danger of the crime, which nevertheless he cannot hold himself back from committing, is clear from the fact that he will not submit it to the calmer judgment of his wife. The contrast of the two characters appears here as everywhere. Lady Macbeth can *wait* for an opportunity of freeing themselves from Banquo: CHAP. VII. iii. ii. 45.

> *Macb.* Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives. iii. ii. 37.
> *Lady M.* But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

To Macbeth the one thing impossible is to wait; and once more his powerlessness to control suspense is his ruin.

The first Shock of Nemesis.

We have reviewed the contrasted characters under Temptation, in the Deed of sin itself, and in the struggle for Concealment: it remains to watch them face to face with their Nemesis. In the present play Shakespeare has combined the nemesis which takes the form of a sudden shock with the yet severer nemesis of a hopeless resistance through the stages of a protracted fall. The first Shock of Nemesis comes in the Banquet Scene. Macbeth has surrendered himself to the supernatural, and from the supernatural his retribution comes. This is not the place to draw out the terrible force of this famous scene; for its bearing on the contrast of character under delineation it is to be remarked that Macbeth faces his ghostly visitation with unflinching courage, yet without a shadow of doubt as to the reality of what nevertheless no one sees but himself. Lady Macbeth is equally true to her character, and fights on to the last in the now hopeless contest—her double task of keeping up appearances for herself and for her husband. Her keen tact in dealing with Macbeth is to be noted. At first she rallies him angrily, and seeks to shame him into self-command; a moment shows iii. iv.

CHAP. VII. that he is too far gone to be reached by such motives. Instantly she changes her tactics, and, employing a device so often effective with patients of disordered brain, she endeavours to recall him to his senses by assuming an ordinary tone of voice; hitherto she has whispered, now, in the hearing of all, she makes the practical remark:

iii. iv. 83. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

The device proves successful, his nerves respond to the tone of everyday life, and recovering himself he uses all his skill of deportment to efface the strangeness of the episode, until the reappearance of his victim plunges the scene in confusion past recovery. In the moment of crisis Lady Macbeth had used roughness to rouse her husband; when the courtiers iii. iv, from 122. are gone she is all tenderness. She utters not a word of reproach: perhaps she is herself exhausted by the strain she has gone through; more probably the womanly solicitude for the physical sufferer thinks only how to procure for her husband 'the season of all natures, sleep.'

The full Nemesis. At last the end comes. The final stage, like the first is brought to the two personages separately. Lady Macbeth has faced every crisis by sheer force of nerve; the nemesis v. i. comes upon her fitly in madness, the brain giving way under the strain of contest which her will has forced upon it. In the delirium of her last appearance before us we can trace three distinct tones of thought working into one another as if in some weird harmony. There is first the mere reproduction of the horrible scenes she has passed through.

One: two: why then 'tis time to do't. . . . Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him. . . . The thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?

Again there is an inner thought contending with the first, the struggle to keep her husband from betraying himself by his irresolution.

No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this

starting. . . . Wash your hands, put on your night-gown; look not so pale. . . . Fie! a soldier and afear'd?

And there is an inmost thought of all; the uprising of her feminine nature against the foulness of the violent deed.

Out, damn'd spot! . . . Here's the smell of blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand—

and the 'sorely charged heart' vents itself in a sigh which the attendants shudder to hear. On Macbeth Nemesis heaps itself in double form. The purely practical man, without resources in himself, finds nemesis in an old age that receives no honour from others.

My way of life — v. iii. 22.
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have, but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud, but deep.

Again, as the drunkard finds his refuge in drink, so the victim of superstition longs for deeper draughts of the supernatural. Macbeth seeks the Witches, forces himself to hear the worst, and suffers nemesis in anticipation in viewing future generations which are to see his foes on his throne. Finally from the supernatural comes the climax of retribution when Macbeth is seen resting in unquestioning reliance on an ironical oracle: till the shock of revelation comes, the pledge of his safety is converted into the sign of his doom, and the brave Macbeth, hero of a hundred battles, throws down his sword and refuses to fight.

iv. i.

iv. i. 110–135.

from iv. i. 80.

v. v, from 33; v. viii, from 13.

v. viii. 22.

VIII.

JULIUS CÆSAR BESIDE HIS MURDERERS AND HIS AVENGER.

A Study in Character-Grouping.

CH. VIII.

Character-Grouping.

EVERY lover of art feels that the different fine arts form not a crowd but a family; the more familiar the mind becomes with them the more it delights to trace in them the application of common ideas to different media of expression. We are reminded of this essential unity by the way in which the arts borrow their terms from one another. 'Colour' is applied to music, 'tone' to painting; we speak of costume as 'loud,' of melody as 'bright,' of orchestration as 'massive'; 'fragrance' was applied by Schumann to Liszt's playing. Two classes of oratorical style have been distinguished as 'statuesque' and 'picturesque'; while the application of a musical term, 'harmony,' and a term of sculpture, 'relief,' to all the arts alike is so common that the transference is scarcely felt. Such usages are not the devices of a straitened vocabulary, but are significant of a single *Art* which is felt to underlie the special *arts*. So the more Drama is brought by criticism into the family of the fine arts the more it will be seen to present the common features. We have already had to notice repeatedly how the idea of pattern or design is the key to dramatic plot. We are in the present study to see how contrast of character, such as was traced in the last study between Lord and Lady Macbeth, when applied to a larger number of personages, produces an effect on the mind analogous to that of *grouping* in pictures and statuary: the different personages not only present points of contrast with

one another, but their varieties suddenly fall into a unity of effect if looked at from some one point of view. An example of such Character-Grouping is seen in the play of *Julius Cæsar*, where the four leading figures, all on the grandest scale, have the elements of their characters thrown into relief by comparison with one another, and the contrast stands out boldly when the four are reviewed in relation to one single idea.

The grouping in Julius Cæsar rests on the antithesis of the practical and inner life.

This idea is the same as that which lay at the root of the Character-Contrast in *Macbeth*—the antithesis of the practical and inner life. It is, however, applied in a totally different sphere. Instead of a simple age in which the lives coincide with the sexes we are carried to the other extreme of civilisation, the final age of Roman liberty, and all four personages are merged in the busy world of political life. Naturally, then, the contrast of the two lives takes in this play a different form. In the play of *Macbeth* the inner life was seen in the force of will which could hold down alike bad and good impulses; while the outer life was made interesting by its confinement to the training given by action, and an exhibition of it devoid of the thoughtfulness and self-control for which the life of activity has to draw upon the inner life. But there is another aspect in which the two may be regarded. The idea of the inner life is reflected in the word 'individuality,' or that which a man has not in common with others. The cultivation of the inner life implies not merely cultivation of our own individuality, but to it also belongs sympathy with the individuality of others; whereas in the sphere of practical life men fall into classes, and each person has his place as a member of these classes. Thus benevolence may take the form of enquiring into individual wants and troubles and meeting these by personal assistance; but a man has an equal claim to be called benevolent who applies himself to such sciences as political economy, studies the springs which regulate human society,

This takes the form of individual sympathies v. public policy.

CH. VIII. and by influencing these in the right direction confers benefits upon whole classes at a time. Charity and political science are the two forms benevolence assumes correspondent to the inner life of individual sympathies and the outer life of public action. Or, if we consider the contrast from the side of rights as distinguished from duties, the supreme form in which the rights of individuals may be summed up is justice; the corresponding claim which public life makes upon us is (in the highest sense of the term) policy: wherever these two, justice and policy, seem to clash, the outer and inner life are brought into conflict. It is in this form that the conflict is raised in the play of *Julius Cæsar*. To get it in its full force, the dramatist goes to the world of antiquity, for one of the leading distinctions between ancient and modern society is that the modern world gives the fullest play to the individual, while in ancient systems the individual was treated as existing solely for the state. 'Liberty' has been a watchword in both ages; but while we mean by liberty the least amount of interference with personal activity, the liberty for which ancient patriots contended was freedom of the government from external or internal control, and the ideal republic of Plato was so contrived as to reduce individual liberty to a minimum. And this subordination of private to public was most fully carried out in Rome. 'The common weal,' says Merivale, 'was after all the grand object of the heroes of Roman story. Few of the renowned heroes of old had attained their eminence as public benefactors without steeling their hearts against the purest instincts of nature. The deeds of a Brutus or a Manlius, of a Sulla or a Cæsar, would have been branded as crimes in private citizens: it was the public character of the actors that stamped them with immortal glory in the eyes of their countrymen.' Accordingly, the opposition of outer and inner life is brought before us most keenly when, in Roman life, a public policy, the cause of republican freedom, seems

to be bound up with the supreme crime against justice and the rights of the individual, assassination. CH. VIII.

Brutus is the central figure of the group: in his character the two sides are so balanced that the antithesis disappears. This evenness of development in his nature is the thought of those who in the play gather around his corpse; giving prominence to the quality in Brutus hidden from the casual observer they say: *Brutus's character so evenly developed that the antithesis disappears.*

> His life was gentle; and the elements — V. v. 73.
> So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world 'This was a man!'

Of another it would be said that he was a poet, a philosopher; of Brutus the only true description was that he was a man! It is in very few characters that force and softness are each carried to such perfection. The strong side of Brutus's character is that which has given to the whole play its characteristic tone. It is seen in the way in which he appreciates the issue at stake. Weak men sin by hiding from themselves what it is they do; Brutus is fully alive to the foulness of conspiracy at the moment in which he is conspiring. *Force of his character.*

> O conspiracy, — II. i. 77.
> Shamest thou to show thy dangerous brow by night,
> When evils are most free? O, then by day
> Where wilt thou find a cavern dark enough
> To mask thy monstrous visage?

His high tone he carries into the darkest scenes of the play. The use of criminal means has usually an intoxicating effect upon the moral sense, and suggests to those once committed to it that it is useless to haggle over the amount of the crime until the end be obtained. Brutus resists this intoxication, setting his face against the proposal to include Antony in Cæsar's fate, and resolving that not one life shall be unnecessarily sacrificed. He scorns the refuge of suicide; and with warmth adjures his comrades not to stain— II. i. 162.

CH. VIII.

ii. i. 114.

> The even virtue of our enterprise,
> Nor the insuppressive mettle of our spirits,
> To think that or our cause or our performance
> Did need an oath; when every drop of blood
> That every Roman bears, and nobly bears,
> Is guilty of a several bastardy,
> If he do break the smallest particle
> Of any promise that hath pass'd from him.

The scale of Brutus's character is again brought out by his relations with other personages of the play. Casca, with all his cynical depreciation of others, has to bear unqualified testimony to Brutus's greatness:

i. iii. 157.

> O, he sits high in all the people's hearts;
> And that which would appear offence in us,
> His countenance, like richest alchemy,
> Will change to virtue and to worthiness.

ii. i, fin. We see Ligarius coming from a sick-bed to join in he knows not what: 'it sufficeth that Brutus leads me on.' And the hero's own thought, when at the point of death he pauses to take a moment's survey of his whole life, is of the unfailing

v. v. 34. power with which he has swayed the hearts of all around him:

> My heart doth joy that yet in all my life
> I found no man but he was true to me.

Above all, contact with Cassius throws into relief the great-

i. ii. ness of Brutus. At the opening of the play it is Cassius that we associate with the idea of force; but his is the ruling mind only while Brutus is hesitating; as soon as Brutus has thrown in his lot with the conspirators, Cassius himself is swept along with the current of Brutus's irresistible influence.

Cf. ii. i. 162–190; iii. i. 140–146, 231–243; iv. iii. 196–225, &c. In the councils every point is decided—and, so far as success is concerned, wrongly decided—against Cassius's better judgment. In the sensational moment when Popilius Lena enters the Senate-house and is seen to whisper Cæsar, Cassius's presence of mind fails him, and he prepares in despair for

iii. i. 19. suicide; Brutus retains calmness enough to *watch faces*:

Cassius, be constant: CH. VIII.
Popilius Lena speaks not of our purposes;
For, look, he smiles, and Cæsar doth not change.

In the Quarrel Scene Cassius has lost all pretensions to dignity of action in the impatience sprung from a ruined cause; Brutus maintains principle in despair. Finally, at the close of the scene, when it is discovered that under all the hardness of this contest for principle Brutus has been hiding a heart broken by the loss of Portia, Cassius is forced to give way and acknowledge Brutus's superiority to himself even in his own ideal of impassiveness: iv. iii. iv. iii, from 145.

I have as much of this in art as you, iv. iii. 194.
But yet my nature could not bear it so.

Its softness.

The force in Brutus's character is obvious: it is rather its softer side that some readers find difficulty in seeing. But this difficulty is in reality a testimony to Shakespeare's skill, for Brutus is a Stoic, and what gentleness we see in him appears in spite of himself. It may be seen in his culture of art, music, and philosophy, which have such an effect in softening the manners. Nor is this in the case of the Roman Brutus a mere conventional culture: these tastes are among his strongest passions. When all is confusion around him on the eve of the fatal battle he cannot restrain his longing for the refreshing tones of his page's lyre; and, the music over, he takes up his philosophical treatise at the page he had turned down. Again Brutus's considerateness for his dependants is in strong contrast with the harshness of Roman masters. On the same eve of the battle he insists that the men who watch in his tent shall lie down instead of standing as discipline would require. An exquisite little episode brings out Brutus's sweetness of demeanour in dealing with his youthful page; this rises to womanly tenderness at the end when, noticing how the boy, wearied out and fallen asleep, is lying in a position to injure his instrument, he rises and disengages it without waking him. iv. iii. 256. iv. iii. 242. iv. iii, from 252.

CH. VIII.

Bru. Look, Lucius, here's the book I sought for so;
I put it in the pocket of my gown.
Luc. I was sure your lordship did not give it me.
Bru. Bear with me, good boy; I am much forgetful.
Can'st thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?
Luc. Ay, my lord, an't please you.
Bru. It does, my boy:
I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing.
Luc. It is my duty, sir.
Bru. I should not urge thy duty past thy might;
I know young bloods look for a time of rest.
Luc. I have slept my lord, already.
Bru. It was well done; and thou shalt sleep again;
I will not hold thee long: if I do live
I will be good to thee. [*Music and a song.*
This is a sleepy tune. O murderous slumber,
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
That plays thee music? Gentle knave, good night;
I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee.—
If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument;
I'll take it from thee; and, good boy, good night.

ii. i, from 233. Brutus's relations with Portia bear the same testimony. Portia is a woman with as high a spirit as Lady Macbeth, and she can inflict a wound on herself to prove her courage and her right to share her husband's secrets. But she lacks the physical nerve of Lady Macbeth; her agitation on the ii. iv. morning of the assassination threatens to betray the conspirators, and when these have to flee from Rome the suspense is too much for her and she commits suicide. Brutus knew his wife better than she knew herself, and was right in seeking to withhold the fatal confidence; yet he allowed himself to be persuaded: no man would be so swayed by a tender woman unless he had a tender spirit of his own. In all these ways we may trace an extreme of gentleness in Brutus. But it is of the essence of his character that this softer side is concealed behind an imperturbability of outward demeanour that belongs to his stoic religion: this struggle between inward and outward is the main feature

This is concealed under stoic imperturbability.

for the actor to bring out. It is a master stroke of Shakespeare that he utilises the euphuistic prose of his age to express impassiveness in Brutus's oration. The greatest man of the world has just been assassinated; the mob are swaying with fluctuating passions; the subtlest orator of his day is at hand to turn those passions into the channel of vengeance for his friend: Brutus called on amid such surroundings to speak for the conspirators still maintains the artificial style of carefully balanced sentences, such as emotionless rhetoric builds up in the quiet of a study.

iii. ii, from 14.

> As Cæsar loved me, I weep for him; as he was fortunate, I rejoice at it; as he was valiant, I honour him: but, as he was ambitious, I slew him. There is tears for his love; joy for his fortune; honour for his valour; and death for his ambition.

The antithesis reappears for Brutus in the action.

Brutus's nature then is developed on all its sides; in his character the antithesis of the outer and inner life disappears. It reappears, however, in the action; for Brutus is compelled to balance a weighty issue, with public policy on the one side, and on the other, not only justice to individual claims, but further the claims of friendship, which is one of the fairest flowers of the inner life. And the balance dips to the wrong side. If the question were of using the weapon of assassination against a criminal too high for the ordinary law to reach, this would be a moral problem which, however doubtful to modern thought, would have been readily decided by a Stoic. But the question which presented itself to Brutus was distinctly not this. Shakespeare has been careful to represent Brutus as admitting to himself that Cæsar has done no wrong: he slays him *for what he might do.*

ii. i. 10-85.

ii. i. 18-34.

> The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
> Remorse from power: and, *to speak truth of Cæsar,*
> *I have not known when his affections sway'd*
> *More than his reason.* But 'tis a common proof,
> That lowliness is young ambition's ladder,
> Whereto the climber-upward turns his face;

CH. VIII.

> But when he once attains the upmost round,
> He then unto the ladder turns his back,
> Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
> By which he did ascend. So Cæsar may.
> Then, lest he may, prevent. And *since the quarrel*
> *Will bear no colour for the thing he is,*
> Fashion it thus; that what he is, augmented,
> Would run to these and these extremities:
> And therefore think him as a serpent's egg
> Which hatch'd, would, as his kind, grow mischievous,
> And kill him in the shell.

It is true that Shakespeare, with his usual 'dramatic hedging,' softens down this immoral bias in a great hero by representing him as both a Roman, of the nation which beyond all other nations exalted the state over the individual, and a Brutus, representative of the house which had risen to greatness by leading violence against tyranny. But, Brutus's own conscience being judge, the man against whom he moves is guiltless; and so the conscious sacrifice of justice and friendship to policy is a fatal error which is source sufficient for the whole tragedy of which Brutus is the hero.

compare i. ii. 159.

Cæsar: discrepancies in his character to be reconciled.

The character of Cæsar is one of the most difficult in Shakespeare. Under the influence of some of his speeches we find ourselves in the presence of one of the master spirits of mankind; other scenes in which he plays a leading part breathe nothing but the feeblest vacillation and weakness. It is the business of Character-Interpretation to harmonise this contradiction; it is not interpretation at all to ignore one side of it and be content with describing Cæsar as vacillating. The force and strength of his character is seen in the impression he makes upon forceful and strong men. The attitude of Brutus to Cæsar seems throughout to be that of looking up; and notably at one point the thought of Cæsar's greatness seems to cast a lurid gleam over the assassination plot itself, and Brutus feels that the grandeur of the victim gives a dignity to the crime:

ii. i. 173. Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods.

The strength and force of Antony again no one will question; and Antony, at the moment when he is alone with the corpse of Cæsar and can have no motive for hypocrisy, apostrophises it in the words—

> Thou art the ruins of the noblest man — iii. i. 256.
> That ever lived in the tide of times.

And we see enough of Cæsar in the play to bear out the opinions of Brutus and Antony. Those who accept vacillation as sufficient description of Cæsar's character must explain his strong speeches as vaunting and self-assertion. But surely it must be possible for dramatic language to distinguish between the true and the assumed force; and equally surely there is a genuine ring in the speeches in which Cæsar's heroic spirit, shut out from the natural sphere of action in which it has been so often proved, leaps restlessly at every opportunity into pregnant words. We may thus feel certain of his lofty physical courage.

> Cowards die many times before their deaths; — ii. ii. 32.
> The valiant never taste of death but once.
> Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
> It seems to me most strange that men should fear . . .
> . . . . . .
> Danger knows full well — ii. ii. 44.
> That Cæsar is more dangerous than he:
> We are two lions litter'd in one day,
> And I the elder and more terrible.

A man must have felt the thrill of courage in search of its food, danger, before his self-assertion finds language of this kind in which to express itself. In another scene we have the perfect *fortiter in re* and *suaviter in modo* of the trained statesman exhibited in the courtesy with which Cæsar receives the conspirators, combined with his perfect readiness to 'tell graybeards the truth.' Nor could imperial firmness be more ideally painted than in the way in which Cæsar 'prevents' Cimber's intercession. ii. ii, from 57. iii. i. 35.

> Be not fond,
> To think that Cæsar bears such rebel blood

> That will be thaw'd from the true quality
> With that which melteth fools; I mean, sweet words,
> Low-crooked court'sies, and base spaniel-fawning.
> Thy brother by decree is banished:
> If thou dost bend and pray and fawn for him,
> I spurn thee like a cur out of my way.
> Know, Cæsar doth not wrong, nor without cause
> Will he be satisfied.

Commonplace authority loudly proclaims that it will never relent: the true imperial spirit feels it a preliminary condition to see first that it never does wrong.

Reconciliation: Cæsar the highest type of the practical;

It is the antithesis of the outer and inner life that explains this contradiction in Cæsar's character. Like Macbeth, he is the embodiment of one side and one side only of the antithesis; he is the complete type of the practical—though in special qualities he is as unlike Macbeth as his age is unlike Macbeth's age. Accordingly Cæsar appears before us perfect up to the point where his own personality comes in. The military and political spheres, in which he has been such a colossal figure, call forth practical powers, and do not involve introspection and meditation on foundation principles of thought.

> Theirs not to reason why:
> Theirs but to do.

The tasks of the soldier and the statesman are imposed upon them by external authority and necessities, and the faculties exercised are those which shape means to ends. But at last Cæsar comes to a crisis that does involve his personality; he attempts a task imposed on him by his own ambition. He plays in a game of which the prize is the world and the stake himself, and to estimate chances in such a game tests self-knowledge and self-command to its depths. How wanting Cæsar is in the cultivation of the inner life is brought out by his contrast with Cassius. The incidents of the flood and the fever, retained by the memory of Cassius, illustrate this. The first of these was no mere swimming-match; the flood in the Tiber was such as to reduce to nothing the difference

but lacking in the inner life.

i. ii. 100–128.

between one swimmer and another. It was a trial of nerve: CH. VIII.
and as long as action was possible Cæsar was not only as
brave as Cassius, but was the one attracted by the danger. I. ii. 102.
Then some chance wave or cross current renders his chance of life hopeless, and no buffeting with lusty sinews is of any avail; that is the point at which the *passive* courage born of the inner life comes in, and gives strength to submit to the inevitable in calmness. This Cæsar lacks, and he calls for rescue: Cassius would have felt the water close over him and have sunk to the bottom and died rather than accept aid from his rival. In like manner the sick bed is a region in which the highest physical and intellectual activity is helpless; the trained self-control of a Stoic may have a sphere for exercise even here; but the god Cæsar shakes, and cries for drink like a sick girl. It is interesting to note how the two types of mind, when brought into personal contact, jar upon one another's self-consciousness. The intellectual man, judging the man of action by the test of mutual intercourse, sees nothing to explain the other's greatness, and wonders what people find in him that they so admire him and submit to his influence. On the other hand, the man of achievement is uneasily conscious of a sort of superiority in one whose intellectual aims and habits he finds it so difficult to follow—yet superiority it is not, for what has he *done*? Shakespeare has illustrated this in the play by contriving to bring Cæsar and his suite across the 'public place' in which Cassius is discoursing to Brutus. Cassius feels the usual irritation at being utterly unable to find in his old acquaintance any special qualities to explain his elevation.

The conception brought out by personal contact with Cassius.

I. ii. 182–214.

> Now, in the names of all the gods at once, I. ii. 148.
> Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed,
> That he is grown so great?

Similarly Cæsar, as he casts a passing glance at Cassius, becomes at once uneasy. 'He thinks too much,' is the exclamation of the man of action:

He loves no plays,
As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music.

The practical man, accustomed to divide mankind into a few simple types, is always uncomfortable at finding a man he cannot classify. Finally there is a climax to the jealousy that exists between the two lives: Cæsar complains that Cassius '*looks quite through the deeds of men.*'

A change in Cæsar and a change in Rome itself.

There is another circumstance to be taken into account in explaining the weakness of Cæsar. A change has come over the spirit of Roman political life itself—such seems to be Shakespeare's conception: Cæsar on his return has found Rome no longer the Rome he had known. Before he left for Gaul, Rome had been the ideal sphere for public life, the arena in which principles alone were allowed to combat, and from which the banishment of personal aims and passions was the first condition of virtue. In his absence Rome has gradually degenerated; the mob has become the ruling force, and introduced an element of uncertainty into political life; politics has passed from science into gambling. A new order of public men has arisen, of which Cassius and Antony are the types; personal aims, personal temptations, and personal risks are now inextricably interwoven with public action. This is a changed order of things to which the mind of Cæsar, cast in a higher mould, lacks the power to adapt itself. His vacillation is the vacillation of unfamiliarity with the new political conditions. He refuses the crown 'each time gentler than the other,' showing want of decisive reading in dealing with the fickle mob; and on his return from the Capitol he is too untrained in hypocrisy to conceal the angry spot upon his face; he has tried to use the new weapons which he does not understand, and has failed. It is a subtle touch of Shakespeare's to the same effect that Cæsar is represented as having himself undergone a change *of late*:

comp. I. i, and III. iii; I. ii. 151, 164; I. iii. 82, 105; III. i. 66–70; V. v. 69–72, &c.

I. ii. 230.

I. ii. 183.

II. i. 195.

For he is superstitious grown of late,
Quite from the main opinion he held once
Of fantasy, of dreams and ceremonies.

To come back to a world of which you have mastered the machinery, and to find that it is no longer governed by machinery at all, that causes no longer produce their effects—this, if anything, might well drive a strong intellect to superstition. And herein consists the pathos of Cæsar's situation. The deepest tragedy of the play is not the assassination of Cæsar, it is rather seen in such a speech as this of Decius: CH. VIII.

> If he be so resolved, — II. i. 202.
> I can o'ersway him; for he loves to hear
> That unicorns may be betray'd with trees,
> And bears with glasses, elephants with holes,
> Lions with toils and men with flatterers;
> But when I tell him, he hates flatterers,
> He says he does, being then most flattered.

Assassination is a less piteous thing than to see the giant intellect by its very strength unable to contend against the low cunning of a fifth-rate intriguer.

Such, then, appears to be Shakespeare's conception of Julius Cæsar. He is the consummate type of the practical: emphatically the public man, complete in all the greatness that belongs to action. On the other hand, the knowledge of self produced by self-contemplation is wanting, and so when he comes to consider the relation of his individual self to the state he vacillates with the vacillation of a strong man moving amongst men of whose greater intellectual subtlety he is dimly conscious: no unnatural conception for a Cæsar who has been founding empires abroad while his fellows have been sharpening their wits in the party contests of a decaying state.

Cassius: his whole character developed and subjected to a master-passion that is disinterested.

The remaining members of the group are Cassius and Antony. In Cassius thought and action have been equally developed, and he has the qualities belonging to both the outer and the inner life. But the side which in Brutus barely preponderated, absolutely tyrannises in Cassius; his public life has given him a grand passion to which the whole of his nature becomes subservient. Inheriting a 'rash

CH. VIII. humour' from his mother, he was specially prepared for impatience of political anomalies; republican independence has become to him an ideal dearer than life.

iv. iii. 120.

i. ii. 95.

> I had as lief not be as live to be
> In awe of such a thing as I myself.

i. ii, iii; ii. i; iii. i. 177, &c. i. ii. 312–319.

He has thus become a professional politician. Politics is to him a game, and men are counters to be used; Cassius finds satisfaction in discovering that even Brutus's 'honourable metal may be wrought from that it is disposed.' He has the politician's low view of human nature; while Brutus talks of principles Cassius interposes appeals to interest: he says to Antony,

iii. i. 177.

> Your voice shall be as strong as any man's
> In the disposing of new dignities.

His party spirit is, as usual, unscrupulous; he seeks to work upon his friend's unsuspecting nobility by concocted letters thrown in at his windows; and in the Quarrel Scene loses patience at Brutus's scruples.

i. ii. 319.

iv. iii. 7, 29, &c.

> I'll not endure it: you forget yourself,
> To hedge me in; I am a soldier, I,
> Older in practice, abler than yourself
> To make conditions.

At the same time he has a party politician's tact; his advice throughout the play is proved by the event to have been right, and he does himself no more than justice when he says his misgiving 'still falls shrewdly to the purpose.' Antony also has all the powers that belong both to the intellectual and practical life; so far as these powers are concerned, he has them developed to a higher degree than even Brutus and Cassius. His distinguishing mark lies in the use to which these powers are put; like Cassius, he has concentrated his whole nature in one aim, but this aim is not a disinterested object of public good, it is unmitigated self-seeking. Antony has greatness enough to appreciate the greatness of Cæsar; hence in the first half of the play he has effaced himself,

iii. i. 145.

Antony: his whole character developed and subjected to selfish passion.

choosing to rise to power as the useful tool of Cæsar. Here, indeed, he is famed as a devotee of the softer studies, but it is not till his patron has fallen that his irresistible strength is put forth. There seems to be but one element in Antony that is not selfish: his attachment to Cæsar is genuine, and its force is measured in the violent imagery of the vow with which, when alone for a moment with the corpse, he promises vengeance till all pity is 'choked with custom of fell deeds.' And yet this perhaps is after all the best illustration of his callousness to higher feelings; for the one tender emotion of his heart is used by him as the convenient weapon with which to fight his enemies and raise himself to power.

CH. VIII.

esp. i. ii, from 190; comp. ii. i. 165.

iii. i, from 254: comp. 194–213.

Such, then, is the Grouping of Characters in the play of *Julius Cæsar*. To catch it they must be contemplated in the light of the antithesis between the outer and inner life. In Brutus the antithesis disappears amid the perfect balancing of his character, to reappear in the action, when Brutus has to choose between his cause and his friend. In Cæsar the practical life only is developed, and he fails as soon as action involves the inner life. Cassius has the powers of both outer and inner life perfect, and they are fused into one master-passion, morbid but unselfish. Antony has carried to an even greater perfection the culture of both lives, and all his powers are concentrated in one purpose, which is purely selfish. In the action in which this group of personages is involved the determining fact is the change that has come over the spirit of Roman life, and introduced into its public policy the element of personal aggrandisement and personal risk. The new spirit works upon Brutus: the chance of winning political liberty by the assassination of one individual just overbalances his moral judgment, and he falls. Yet in his fall he is glorious: the one false judgment of his life brings him, what is more to him than victory, the chance of maintaining the calmness of principle amid the ruins of a falling cause, and showing how a Stoic can fail and die. The new spirit

The Grouping as a whole surveyed.

CH. VIII. affects Cæsar and tempts him into a personal enterprise in which success demands a meanness that he lacks, and he is betrayed to his fall. Yet in his fall he is glorious: the assassins' daggers purge him from the stain of his momentary personal ambition, and the sequel shows that the Roman world was not worthy of a ruler such as Cæsar. The spirit of the age affects Cassius, and fans his passion to work itself out to his own destruction, and he falls. Yet in his fall he is glorious: we forgive him the lowered tone of his political action when we see by the spirit of the new rulers how desperate was the chance for which he played, and how Cassius and his loved cause of republican freedom expire together. The spirit of the age which has wrought upon the rest is controlled and used by Antony, and he rises on their ruins. Yet in his rise he is less glorious than they in their fall: he does all for self; he may claim therefore the prize of success, but in goodness he has no share beyond that he is permitted to be the passive instrument of punishing evil.

IX.

How the Play of Julius Cæsar works to a Climax at the centre.

A Study in Passion and Movement.

Passion and Movement as elements of dramatic effect.

THE preceding chapters have been confined to two of the main elements in dramatic effect, Character and Plot: the third remains to be illustrated. Amongst other devices of public amusement the experiment has been tried of arranging a game of chess to be played by living pieces on a monster board; if we suppose that in the midst of such a game the real combative instincts of the living pieces should be suddenly aroused, that the knight should in grim earnest plunge his spear into his nearest opponent, and that missiles should actually be discharged from the castles, then the shock produced in the feelings of the bystanders by such a change would serve to bring out with emphasis the distinction between Plot and the third element of dramatic effect, Passion. Plot is an interest of a purely intellectual kind, it traces laws, principles, order, and design in the incidents of life. Passion, on the other hand, depends on the human character of the personages involved; it consists in the effects produced on the spectator's emotional nature as his sympathy follows the characters through the incidents of the plot; it is War as distinguished from *Kriegspiel*. Effects of such Passion are numerous and various: the present study is concerned with its *Movement*. This Movement comprehends a class of dramatic effects differing in one obvious

CHAP. IX.

particular from the effects considered so far. Character-Interpretation and Plot are both analytical in their nature; the play has to be taken to pieces and details selected from various parts have to be put together to give the idea of a complete character, or to make up some single thread of design. Movement, on the contrary, follows the actual order of the events as they take place in the play itself. The emotional effects produced by such events as they succeed one another will not be uniform and monotonous; the skill of the dramatist will lie in concentrating effect at some points and relieving it at others; and to watch such play of passion through the progress of the action will be a leading dramatic interest. Now we have already had occasion to notice the prominence which Shakespeare in his dramatic construction gives to the central point of a play; symmetry more than sensation is the effect which has an attraction for his genius, and the finale to which the action is to lead is not more important to him than the balancing of the whole drama about a turning-point in the middle. Accordingly it is not surprising to find that in the Passion-Movement of his dramas a similar plan of construction is often followed; that all other variations are subordinated to one great Climax of Passion at the centre. To repeat an illustration already applied to Plot: the movement of the passion seems to follow the form of a regular arch, commencing in calmness, rising through emotional strain to a summit of agitation at the centre, then through the rest of the play declining into a calmness of a different kind. It is the purpose of this and the next studies to illustrate this kind of movement in two very different plays. *Julius Cæsar* has the simplest of plots; our attention is engaged with a train of emotion which is made to rise gradually to a climax at the centre, and then equally gradually to decline. *Lear*, on the contrary, is amongst the most intricate of Shakespeare's plays; nevertheless the dramatist contrives to keep the same simple form of emotional

Passion connected with the movement of a drama.

The regular arch-form applicable to Passion-Movement.

effect, and its complex passions unite in producing a concentration of emotional agitation in a few central scenes.

In Julius Cæsar the movement follows the justification of the conspirators to the audience.

The passion in the play of *Julius Cæsar* gathers around the conspirators, and follows them through the mutations of their fortunes. If however we are to catch the different parts of the action in their proper proportions we must remember the character of these conspirators, and especially of their leaders Brutus and Cassius. These are actuated in what they do not by personal motives but by devotion to the public good and the idea of republican liberty; accordingly in following their career we must not look too exclusively at their personal success and failure. The exact key to the movement of the drama will be given by fixing attention upon the *justification of the conspirators' cause* in the minds of the audience; and it is this which is found to rise gradually to its height in the centre of the play, and from that point to decline to the end. I have pointed out in the preceding study how the issue at stake in *Julius Cæsar* amounts to a conflict between the outer and inner life, between devotion to a public enterprise and such sympathy with the claims of individual humanity as is specially fostered by the cultivation of the inner nature. The issue is reflected in words of Brutus already quoted:

this rises to the centre and declines from the centre.

> The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins Remorse from power. — II. i. 18.

Brutus applies this as a test to Cæsar's action, and is forced to acquit him: but is not Brutus here laying down the very principle of which his own error in the play is the violation? The assassin's dagger puts Brutus and the conspirators in the position of power; while 'remorse'—the word in Shakespearean English means human sympathy—is the due of their victim Cæsar, whose rights to justice as a man, and to more than justice as the friend of Brutus, the conspirators have the responsibility of balancing against the claims of a political cause. These claims of justice and humanity are

CHAP. IX. deliberately ignored by the stoicism of Brutus, while the rest of the conspirators are blinded to them by the mists of political enthusiasm; this outraged human sympathy asserts itself after Cæsar's death in a monstrous form in the passions of the mob, which are guided by the skill of Antony to the destruction of the assassins. Of course both the original violation of the balance between the two lives and the subsequent reaction are equally corrupt. The stoicism of Brutus, with its suppression of the inner sympathies, arrives practically at the principle—destined in the future history of the world to be the basis of a yet greater crime—that it is expedient that one man should die rather than that a whole people should perish. On the other hand, Antony trades upon the fickle violence of the populace, and uses it as much for personal ends as for vengeance. This demoralisation of both the sides of character is the result of their divorce. Such is the essence of this play if its action be looked at as a whole; but it belongs to the movement of dramatic passion that we see the action only in its separate parts at different times. Through the first half of the play, while the justification of the conspirators' cause is rising, the other side of the question is carefully hidden from us; from the point of the assassination the suppressed element starts into prominence, and sweeps our sympathies along with it to its triumph at the conclusion of the play.

First stage: the conspiracy forming. Passion indistinguishable from mere interest. i. i, ii.

In following the movement of the drama the action seems to divide itself into stages. In the first of these stages, which comprehends the first two scenes, the conspiracy is only forming; the sympathy with which the spectator follows the details is entirely free from emotional agitation; passion so far is indistinguishable from mere interest. The opening scene strikes appropriately the key-note of the whole action.

Starting-point: signs of reaction in the

In it we see the tribunes of the people—officers whose whole *raison d'être* is to be the mouthpiece of the commonalty—restraining their own clients from the noisy honours they are dis-

posed to pay to Cæsar. To the justification in our eyes of a conspiracy against Cæsar, there could not be a better starting-point than this hint that the popular worship of Cæsar, which has made him what he is, is itself reaching its reaction-point. Such a suggestion moreover makes the whole play one complete *wave* of popular fickleness from crest to crest.

popular worship of Cæsar. i. i.

The second is the scene upon which the dramatist mainly relies for the *crescendo* in the justification of the conspirators. It is a long scene, elaborately contrived so as to keep the conspirators and their cause before us at their very best, and the victim at his very worst. Cassius is the life and spirit of this scene, as he is of the whole republican movement. Cassius is excellent soil for republican principles. The 'rash humour' his mother gave him would predispose him to impatience of those social inequalities and conventional distinctions against which republicanism sets itself. Again he is a hard-thinking man, to whom the perfect realisation of an ideal theory would be as palpable an aim as the more practical purposes of other men. He is a Roman moreover, at once proud of his nation as the greatest in the world, and aware that this national greatness had been through all history bound up with the maintenance of a republican constitution. His republicanism gives to Cassius the dignity that is always given to a character by a grand passion, whether for a cause, a woman, or an idea—the unification of a whole life in a single aim, by which the separate strings of a man's nature are, as it were, tuned into harmony. In the present scene Cassius is expounding the cause which is his life-object. Nor is this all. Cassius was politician enough to adapt himself to his hearers, and could hold up the lower motives to those who would be influenced by them; but in the present case it is the 'honourable metal' of a Brutus that he has to work upon, and his exposition of republicanism must be adapted to the highest possible

The Rise begins. The cause seen at its best, the victim at his worst. i. ii.

CHAP. IX. standard. Accordingly, in the language of the scene we find the idea of human equality expressed in its most ideal form. Without it Cassius thinks life not worth living.

i. ii. 95.

> I had as lief not be as live to be
> In awe of such a thing as I myself.
> I was born free as Cæsar; so were you;
> We both have fed as well, and we can both
> Endure the winter's cold as well as he.

The examples follow of the flood and fever incidents, which show how the majesty of Cæsar vanished before the violence of natural forces and the prostration of disease.

115.

> And this man
> Is now become a god, and Cassius is
> A wretched creature and must bend his body,
> If Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.

In the eye of the state, individuals are so many members of a class, in precisely the way that their names are so many examples of the proper noun.

142.

> Brutus and Cæsar: what should be in that 'Cæsar'?
> Why should that name be sounded more than yours?
> Write them together, yours is as fair a name;
> Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well;
> Weigh them, it is as heavy; conjure with them,
> Brutus will start a spirit as soon as Cæsar.
> Now, in the names of all the gods at once,
> Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed,
> That he is grown so great?

And this exposition of the conspirators' cause in its highest form is at the same time thrown into yet higher relief by a background to the scene, in which the victim is presented at his worst. All through the conversation between Brutus and Cassius, the shouting of the mob reminds of the scene which

from 182. is at the moment going on in the Capitol, while the conversation is interrupted for a time by the returning procession of Cæsar. In this action behind the scenes which thus mingles with the main incident Cæsar is committing the one fault of his life: this is the fault of 'treason,' which can be justified

only by being successful and so becoming 'revolution,' whereas Cæsar is failing, and deserving to fail from the vacillating hesitation with which he sins. Moreover, unfavourable as such incidents would be in themselves to our sympathy with Cæsar, yet it is not the actual facts that we are permitted to see, but they are further distorted by the medium through which they reach us—the cynicism of Casca which belittles and disparages all he relates.

Bru. Tell us the manner of it, gentle Casca. i. ii. 235.

Casca. I can as well be hanged as tell the manner of it: it was mere foolery; I did not mark it. I saw Mark Antony offer him a crown;—yet 'twas not a crown neither, 'twas one of these coronets:—and, as I told you, he put it by once: but, for all that, to my thinking, he would fain have had it. Then he offered it to him again; then he put it by again: but, to my thinking, he was very loath to lay his fingers off it. And then he offer'd it the third time; he put it the third time by: and still as he refused it, the rabblement hooted and clapped their chapped hands and threw up their sweaty night-caps and uttered such a deal of stinking breath because Cæsar had refused the crown that it had almost choked Cæsar; for he swounded and fell down at it: and, for mine own part, I durst not laugh, for fear of opening my lips and receiving the bad air. . . . When he came to himself again, he said, If he had done or said anything amiss, he desired their worships to think it was his infirmity. Three or four wenches, where I stood, cried, 'Alas, good soul!' and forgave him with all their hearts; but there 's no heed to be taken of them; if Cæsar had stabbed their mothers they would have done no less.

Second stage: the conspiracy formed and developing. Passion-Strain begins.

At the end of the scene Brutus is won, and we pass immediately into the second stage of the action: the conspiracy is now formed and developing, and the emotional strain begins. The adhesion of Brutus has given us confidence that the conspiracy will be effective, and we have only to *wait* for the issue. This mere notion of *waiting* is itself enough to introduce an element of agitation into the passion sufficient to mark off this stage of the action from the preceding. How powerful suspense is for this purpose we have expressed in the words of the play itself:

i. iii–ii. ii.

Suspense one element in the strain of passion.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is ii. i. 63.

CHAP. IX.

> Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream:
> The Genius and the mortal instruments
> Are then in council; and the state of man,
> Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
> The nature of an insurrection.

The background of tempest and supernatural portents a device for increasing the strain.

But besides the suspense there is a special device for securing the agitation proper to this stage of the passion: throughout there is maintained a Dramatic Background of night, storm, and supernatural portents.

The conception of nature as exhibiting sympathy with sudden turns in human affairs is one of the most fundamental instincts of poetry. To cite notable instances: it is this which accompanies with storm and whirlwind the climax to the *Book of Job*, and which leads Milton to make the whole universe sensible of Adam's transgression:

> Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again
> In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan;
> Sky lowr'd, and muttering thunder, some sad drops
> Wept at completing of the mortal sin
> Original.

So too the other end of the world's history has its appropriate accompaniments: 'the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven.' There is a *vagueness* of terror inseparable from these outbursts of nature, so mysterious in their causes and aims. They are actually the most mighty of forces—for human artillery is feeble beside the earthquake—yet they are invisible: the wind works its havoc without the keenest eye being able to perceive it, and the lightning is never seen till it has struck. Again, there is something weird in the feeling that the most frightful powers in the material universe are all *soft things*. The empty air becomes the irresistible wind; the fluid and yielding water wear down the hard and massive rock and determines the shape of the earth; impalpable fire that is blown about in every direction can be roused till it devours the solidest constructions of human

skill; while the most powerful agencies of all, electricity and atomic force, are imperceptible to any of the senses and are known only by their results. This uncanny terror attaching to the union between force and softness is the inspiration of one of Homer's most unique episodes, in which the bewildered Achilles, struggling with the river-god, finds the strength and skill of the finished warrior vain against the ever-rising water, and bitterly feels the violation of the natural order— CHAP. IX.

> That strong might fall by strong, where now weak water's luxury
> Must make my death blush.

To the terrible in nature are added portents of the supernatural, sudden violations of the uniformity of nature, the principle upon which all science is founded. The solitary bird of night has been seen in the crowded Capitol; fire has played around a human hand without destroying it; lions, forgetting their fierceness, have mingled with men; clouds drop fire instead of rain; graves are giving up their dead; the chance shapes of clouds take distinctness to suggest tumult on the earth. Such phenomena of nature and the supernatural, agitating from their appeal at once to fear and mystery, and associated by the fancy with the terrible in human events, have made a deep impression upon primitive thought; and the impression has descended by generations of inherited tradition until, whatever may be the attitude of the intellect to the phenomena themselves, their associations in the emotional nature are of agitation. They thus become appropriate as a Dramatic Background to an agitated passion in the scenes themselves, calling out the emotional effect by a vague sympathy, much as a musical note may set in vibration a distant string that is in unison with it. i. iii; ii. ii. &c

This device then is used by Shakespeare in the second stage of the present play. We see the warning terrors through the eyes of men of the time, and their force is

CHAP. IX.

measured by the fact that they shake the cynical Casca into eloquence.

i. iii. 3.

> Are not you moved, when all the sway of earth
> Shakes like a thing unfirm? O Cicero,
> I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds
> Have rived the knotty oaks, and I have seen
> The ambitious ocean swell and rage and foam,
> To be exalted with the threatening clouds:
> But never till to-night, never till now,
> Did I go through a tempest dropping fire.
> Either there is a civil strife in heaven,
> Or else the world, too saucy with the gods,
> Incenses them to send destruction.

And the idea thus started at the commencement is kept before our minds throughout this stage of the drama by perpetual allusions, however slight, to the sky and external nature. Brutus reads the secret missives by the light of exhalations whizzing through the air; when some of the conspirators step aside, to occupy a few moments while the rest are conferring apart, it is to the sky their thoughts naturally seem to turn, and they with difficulty can make out the East from the West; the discussion of the conspirators includes the effect on Cæsar of the night's prodigies. Later Portia remonstrates against her husband's exposure to the raw and dank morning, to the rheumy and unpurged air; even when daylight has fully returned, the conversation is of Calpurnia's dream and the terrible prodigies.

compare ii. i. 44, 101, 198, 221, 263; ii. ii.

Against this background are displayed, first single figures of Cassius and other conspirators; then Brutus alone in calm deliberation: then the whole band of conspirators, their wild excitement side by side with Brutus's immovable moderation. Then the Conspiracy Scene fades in the early morning light into a display of Brutus in his softer relations; and with complete return of day changes to the house of Cæsar on the fatal morning. Cæsar also is displayed in contact with the supernatural, as represented by Calpurnia's terrors and repeated messages of omens that forbid his venturing upon

i. iii.
ii. i. 1–85.
ii. i. 86–228.
ii. i, from 233.
ii. ii.

public action for that day. Cæsar faces all this with his usual loftiness of mind; yet the scene is so contrived that, as far as immediate effect is concerned, this very loftiness is made to tell against him. The unflinching courage that overrides and interprets otherwise the prodigies and warnings seems presumption to us who know the reality of the danger. It is the same with his yielding to the humour of his wife. Why should he not? his is not the conscious weakness that must be firm to show that it is not afraid. Yet when, upon Decius's explaining away the dream and satisfying Calpurnia's fears, Cæsar's own attraction to danger leads him to persevere in his first intention, this change of purpose seems to us, who have heard Decius's boast that he can o'ersway Cæsar with flattery, a confirmation of Cæsar's weakness. So in accordance with the purpose that reigns through the first half of the play the victim is made to appear at his worst: the *passing* effect of the scene is to suggest weakness in Cæsar, while it is in fact furnishing elements which, upon reflection, go to build up a character of strength. On the other hand, throughout this stage the justification of the conspirators' cause gains by their confidence and their high tone; in particular by the way in which they interpret to their own advantage the supernatural element. Cassius feels the wildness of the night as in perfect harmony with his own spirit.

CHAP. IX

Cæsar still seen at a disadvantage;

ii. ii. 8–56.

ii. i. 202.

and the justification of the conspirators still rising.

i. iii. 42–79.

> For my part, I have walk'd about the streets, i. iii. 46.
> Submitting me unto the perilous night,
> And, thus unbraced, Casca, as you see,
> Have bared my bosom to the thunder-stone;
> And when the cross blue lightning seem'd to open
> The breast of heaven, I did present myself
> Even in the aim and very flash of it.

And it needs only a word from him to communicate his confidence to his comrades.

> *Cassius.* Now could I, Casca, name to thee a man i. iii. 72.
> Most like this dreadful night,
> That thunders, lightens, opens graves, and roars

CHAP. IX.

As doth the lion in the Capitol,
A man no mightier than thyself or me
In personal action, yet prodigious grown
And fearful, as these strange eruptions are—
Casca. 'Tis Cæsar that you mean; is it not, Cassius?

Third stage. The Crisis: the passion-strain rises to a Climax. ii. iii–iii. i. 121.

The third stage of the action brings us to the climax of the passion; the strain upon our emotions now rises to a height of agitation. The exact commencement of the crisis seems to be marked by the soothsayer's words at the opening of Act III. Cæsar observes on entering the Capitol the soothsayer who had warned him to beware of this very day.

Cæsar. The ides of March are come.
Sooth. Ay, Cæsar; but not gone.

Such words seem to measure out a narrow area of time in which the crisis is to work itself out. There is however no distinct break between different stages of a dramatic movement like that in the present play; and two short incidents have preceded this scene which have served as emotional devices to bring about a distinct advance in the intensification of the strain. In the first, Artemidorus appeared reading a letter of warning which he purposed to present to Cæsar on his way to the fatal spot. In the Capitol Scene he presents it, while the ready Decius hastens to interpose another petition to take off Cæsar's attention. Artemidorus conjures Cæsar to read his first for 'it touches him nearer'; but the imperial chivalry of Cæsar forbids:

Devices for working up the agitation.

Artemidorus; ii. iii and iii. i. 3.

What touches us ourself shall be last served.

Portia; ii. iv.

The momentary hope of rescue is dashed. In the second incident Portia has been displayed completely unnerved by the weight of a secret to the anxiety of which she is not equal; she sends messengers to the Capitol and recalls them as she recollects that she dare give them no message; her agitation has communicated itself to us, besides suggesting the fear that it may betray to others what she is anxious to conceal. Our sympathy has thus been tossed

from side to side, although in its general direction it still moves on the side of the conspirators. In the crisis itself the agitation becomes painful as the entrance of Popilius Lena and his secret communication to Cæsar cause a panic that threatens to wreck the whole plot on the verge of its success. Brutus's nerve sustains even this trial, and the way for the accomplishment of the deed is again clear. Emotional devices like these have carried the passion up to a climax of agitation; and the conspirators now advance to present their pretended suit and achieve the bloody deed. To the last the double effect of Cæsar's demeanour continues. Considered in itself, his unrelenting firmness of principle exhibits the highest model of a ruler; yet to us, who know the purpose lurking behind the hypocritical intercession of the conspirators, Cæsar's self-confidence resembles the infatuation that goes before Nemesis. He scorns the fickle politicians before him as mere wandering sparks of heavenly fire, while he is left alone as a pole-star of true-fixed and resting quality:—and in answer to his presumptuous boast that he can never be moved come the blows of the assassins which strike him down; while there is a flash of irony as he is seen to have fallen beside the statue of Pompey, and the marble seems to gleam in cold triumph over the rival at last lying bleeding at its feet. The assassination is accomplished, the cause of the conspirators is won: pity notwithstanding we are swept along with the current of their enthusiasm; and the justification that has been steadily rising from the commencement reaches its climax as, their adversaries dispersing in terror, the conspirators dip their hands in their victim's blood, and make their triumphant appeal to the whole world and all time.

CHAP. IX.

Popilius Lena. III. i. 13.

from 58.

compare 115.

The justification at its height in the appeal to all time.

Cassius. Stoop, then, and wash. How many ages hence III.
Shall this our lofty scene be acted over
In states unborn and accents yet unknown!
Brutus. How many times shall Cæsar bleed in sport,

CHAP. IX.

That now on Pompey's basis lies along,
No worthier than the dust!

Cassius. So oft as that shall be,
So often shall the knot of us be call'd
The men that gave their country LIBERTY!

Catastrophe, and commencement of the Reaction. iii. i, from 122.

Enter a servant: this simple stage-direction is the 'catastrophe,' the turning-round of the whole action; the arch has reached its apex and the Reaction has begun. So instantaneous is the change, that though it is only the servant of Antony who speaks, yet the first words of his message ring with the peculiar tone of subtly-poised sentences which are inseparably associated with Antony's eloquence; it is like the first announcement of that which is to be a final theme in music, and from this point this tone dominates the scene to the very end.

125.

Thus he bade me say:
Brutus is noble, wise, valiant, and honest,
Cæsar was mighty, bold, royal, and loving,
Say I love Brutus, and I honour him;
Say I fear'd Cæsar, honour'd him, and lov'd him.
If Brutus will vouchsafe that Antony
May safely come to him, and be resolv'd
How Cæsar hath deserved to lie in death,
Mark Antony shall not love Cæsar dead
So well as Brutus living.

In the whole Shakespearean Drama there is nowhere such a swift swinging round of a dramatic action as is here marked by this sudden up-springing of the suppressed individuality in Antony's character, hitherto so colourless that he has been spared by the conspirators as a mere limb of Cæsar. The tone of exultant triumph in the conspirators has in an instant given place to Cassius's 'misgiving' as Brutus grants Antony an audience; and when Antony enters, Brutus's first words to him fall into the form of apology. The quick subtlety of Antony's intellect has grasped the whole situation, and with irresistible force he slowly feels his way towards using the conspirators' aid for crushing themselves

ii. i. 165.

iii. i. 144.

from 164.

and avenging their victim. The bewilderment of the conspirators in the presence of this unlooked-for force is seen in Cassius's unavailing attempt to bring Antony to the point, as to what compact he will make with them. Antony, on the contrary, reads his men with such nicety that he can indulge himself in sailing close to the wind, and grasps fervently the hands of the assassins while he pours out a flood of bitter grief over the corpse. It is not hypocrisy, nor a trick to gain time, this conciliation of his enemies. Steeped in the political spirit of the age, Antony knows, as no other man, the mob which governs Rome, and is conscious of the mighty engine he possesses in his oratory to sway that mob in what direction he pleases; when his bold plan has succeeded, and his adversaries have consented to meet him in contest of oratory, then ironical conciliation becomes the natural relief to his pent-up passion.

iii. i. 211; compare 177.

from 184.

> Friends am I with you all and love you all, 220.
> *Upon this hope, that you shall give me reasons*
> Why and wherein Cæsar was dangerous.

It is as he feels the sense of innate oratorical power and of the opportunity his enemies have given to that power, that he exaggerates his temporary amity with the men he is about to crush: it is the executioner arranging his victim comfortably on the rack before he proceeds to apply the levers. Already the passion of the drama has fallen under the guidance of Antony. The view of Cæsar as an innocent victim is now allowed full play upon our sympathies when Antony, left alone with the corpse, can drop the artificial mask and give vent to his love and vengeance. The success of the conspiracy had begun to decline as we marked Brutus's ill-timed generosity to Antony in granting him the funeral oration; it crumbles away through the cold unnatural euphuism of Brutus's speech in its defence; it is hurried to its ruin when Antony at last exercises his spell upon the Roman people and upon the reader. The speech

from 254.

231–243.

iii. ii, from 13.

iii. ii, from 78.

CHAP. IX. of Antony, with its mastery of every phase of feeling, is a perfect sonata upon the instrument of the human emotions.

iii. ii. 78. Its opening theme is sympathy with bereavement, against which are working as if in conflict anticipations of future

95, 109, &c. themes, doubt and compunction. A distinct change of movement comes with the first introduction of what is to be

133. the final subject, the mention of the will. But when this new movement has worked up from curiosity to impatience, there

177. is a diversion: the mention of the victory over the Nervii turns the emotions in the direction of historic pride, which

178. harmonises well with the opposite emotions roused as the orator fingers hole after hole in Cæsar's mantle made by the daggers of his false friends, and so leads up to a sudden

200. shock when he uncovers the body itself and displays the popular idol and its bloody defacement. Then the finale

243. begins: the forgotten theme of the will is again started, and from a burst of gratitude the passion quickens and intensifies to rage, to fury, to mutiny. The mob is won to the Reaction; and the curtain that falls upon the third Act rises for a moment to display the populace tearing a man to pieces simply because he bears the same name as one of the conspirators.

The mob won to the Reaction.

iii. iii.

Last stage. Development of an inevitable fate: passion-strain ceases.

The final stage of the action works out the development of an inevitable fate. The emotional strain now ceases, and, as in the first stage, the passion is of the calmer order, the calmness in this case of pity balanced by a sense of justice. From the opening of the fourth Act the decline in the justification of the conspirators is intimated by the logic of events. The first scene exhibits to us the triumvirate that now governs Rome, and shows that in this triumvirate

Acts iv, v. Antony is supreme: with the man who is the embodiment

iv. i. of the Reaction thus appearing at the head of the world, the fall of the conspirators is seen to be inevitable. The decline of our sympathy with them continues in the following

iv. ii. 3. scenes. The Quarrel Scene shows how low the tone of

Cassius has fallen since he has dealt with assassination as a political weapon; and even Brutus's moderation has hardened into unpleasing harshness. There is at this point plenty of relief to such unpleasing effects: there is the exhibition of the tender side of Brutus's character as shown in his relations with his page, and the display of friendship maintained between Brutus and Cassius amid falling fortunes. But such incidents as these have a different effect upon us from that which they would have had at an earlier period; the justification of the conspirators has so far declined that now attractive touches in them serve only to increase the pathos of a fate which, however, our sympathy no longer seeks to resist. We get a supernatural foreshadowing of the end in the appearance to Brutus of Cæsar's Ghost, and the omen Cassius sees of the eagles that had consorted his army to Philippi giving place to ravens, crows, and kites on the morning of battle: this lends the authority of the invisible world to our sense that the conspirators' cause is doomed. And judicial blindness overtakes them as Brutus's authority in council overweighs in point after point the shrewder advice of Cassius. Through the scenes of the fifth Act we see the republican leaders fighting on without hope. The last remnant of justification for their cause ceases as the conspirators themselves seem to acknowledge their error and fate. Cassius as he feels his death-blow recognises the very weapon with which he had committed the crime:

CHAP. IX.

Iv. iii. 148, &c.

Iv. iii, from 239.

Iv. iii.

Iv. iii. 275.

v. i. 80.

Iv. iii. 196–230.

Justification entirely vanishes as the conspirators recognise Cæsar's victory.

> Cæsar, thou art revenged, v. iii. 45.
> Even with the sword that kill'd thee.

And at last even the firm spirit of Brutus yields:

> O Julius Cæsar, thou art mighty yet! v. v. 94.
> Thy spirit walks abroad, and turns our swords
> In our own proper entrails.

X.

How Climax meets Climax in the centre of Lear.

A Study in more complex Passion and Movement.

CHAP. X.

The plot of Lear highly complex.

IN *Julius Cæsar* we have seen how, in the case of a very simple play, a few simple devices are sufficient to produce a regular rise and fall in the passion. We now turn to a highly elaborate plot and trace how, notwithstanding the elaborateness, a similar concentration of the passion in the centre of the play can be secured. *King Lear* is one of the most complex of Shakespeare's tragedies; its plot is made up of a number of separate actions, with their combinations accurately carried out, the whole impressing us with a sense of artistic involution similar to that of an elaborate musical fugue. Here, however, we are concerned only indirectly with the plot of the play: we need review it no further than may suffice to show what distinct interests enter into it, and enable us to observe how the separate trains of passion work toward a common climax at the centre.

The main plot exhibits the Problem form of

Starting from the notion of pattern as a fundamental idea we have seen how Plot presents trains of events in human life taking form and shape as a crime and its nemesis, an oracle and its fulfilment, the rise and fall of an individual, or even as simply a story. The particular form of action underlying the main plot of *King Lear* is different from any we have yet noticed. It may be described as a *Problem Action*. A mathematician in his problem assumes some unusual com-

dramatic action.

bination of forces to have come about, and then proceeds to trace its consequences: so the Drama often deals with problems in history and life, setting up, before the commencement of the play or early in the action, some peculiar arrangement of moral relations, and then throughout the rest of the action developing the consequences of these to the personages involved. Thus the opening scene of *King Lear* is occupied in bringing before us a pregnant and suggestive state of affairs: imperiousness is represented as overthrowing conscience and setting up an unnatural distribution of power. A human problem has thus been enunciated which the remainder of the play has to work out to its natural solution.

The problem stated.

Imperiousness seems to be the term appropriate to Lear's conduct in the first scene. This is no case of dotage dividing an inheritance according to public declarations of affection. The division had already been made according to the best advice: in the case of two of the daughters 'equalities had been so weighed that curiosity in neither could make choice of either's moiety'; and if the portion of the youngest and best loved of the three was the richest, this is a partiality natural enough to absolute power. The opening scene of the play is simply the court ceremony in which the formal transfer is to be made. Lear is already handing to his daughters the carefully drawn maps which mark the boundaries of the provinces, when he suddenly pauses, and, with the yearning of age and authority for testimonies of devotion, calls upon his daughters for declarations of affection, the easiest of returns for the substantial gifts he is giving them, and which Goneril and Regan pour forth with glib eloquence. Then Lear turns to Cordelia, and, thinking delightedly of the special prize he has marked out for the pet of his old age, asks her:

i. i. 3, &c.

38.

49.

84.

> What can you say to draw
> A third more opulent than your sisters?

But Cordelia has been revolted by the fulsome flattery of the

CHAP. X.

sisters whose hypocrisy she knows so well, and she bluntly refuses to be drawn into any declaration of affection at all. Cordelia might well have found some other method of separating herself from her false sisters, without thus flouting her father before his whole court in a moment of tenderness to herself; or, if carried away by the indignation of the moment, a sign of submission would have won her a ready pardon. But Cordelia, sweet and strong as her character is in great things, has yet inherited a touch of her father's temper, and the moment's sullenness is protracted into obstinacy. Cordelia then has committed an offence of manner; Lear's passion vents itself in a sentence proper only to a moral crime: now the punishment of a minute offence with wholly disproportionate severity simply because it is an offence against personal will is an exact description of imperiousness.

compare i. i. 131.

As Lear stands for imperiousness, so conscience is represented by Kent, who, with the voice of authority derived from lifelong intimacy and service, interposes to check the King's passion in its headlong course.

141–190.

Kent. Royal Lear,
Whom I have ever honour'd as my king,
Loved as my father, as my master follow'd,
As my great patron thought on in my prayers,—
Lear. The bow is bent and drawn, make from the shaft.
Kent. Let it fall rather, though the fork invade
The region of my heart: be Kent unmannerly
When Lear is mad. What wilt thou do, old man?
Think'st thou that duty shall have dread to speak,
When power to flattery bows? To plainness honour's bound,
When majesty stoops to folly Reverse thy doom . . .
Lear. Kent, on thy life, no more.
Kent. My life I never held but as a pawn
To wage against thy enemies, nor fear to lose it,
Thy safety being the motive . . .
Lear. O, vassal! miscreant!
[*Laying his hand on his sword.*
Albany. } Dear sir, forbear.
Cornwall. }

Kent. Do:
Kill thy physician, and the fee bestow
Upon thy foul disease. Revoke thy doom;
Or, whilst I can vent clamour from my throat,
I'll tell thee thou dost evil.

In the banishment of this Kent, then, the resistance of Lear's conscience is overcome, and his imperious passion has full swing in transferring Cordelia's kingdom to her treacherous sisters.

The opening scene has put before us, not in words but figured in action, a problem in human affairs: the violation of moral equity has set up an unnatural arrangement of power—power taken from the good and lodged in the hands of the bad. Here is, so to speak, a piece of moral unstable equilibrium, and the rebound from it is to furnish the remainder of the action. The very structure of the plot corresponds with the simple structure of a scientific proposition. The latter consists of two unequal parts: a few lines are sufficient to enunciate the problem, while a whole treatise may be required for its solution. So in *King Lear* a single scene brings about the unnatural state of affairs, the consequences of which it takes the rest of the play to trace. The 'catastrophe,' or turning-point of the play at which the ultimate issues are decided, appears in the present case, not close to the end of the play, nor (as in *Julius Cæsar*) in the centre, but close to the commencement: at the end of the opening scene Lear's act of folly has in reality determined the issue of the whole action; the scenes which follow are only working out a determined issue to its full realisation.

The solution of the problem in a triple tragedy.

We have seen the problem itself, the overthrow of conscience by imperiousness and the transfer of power from the good to the bad: what is the solution of it as presented by the incidents of the play? The consequences flowing from what Lear has done make up three distinct tragedies, which go on working side by side, and all of which are essential to the full solution of the problem. First, there is the nemesis

CHAP. X.

upon Lear himself—the double retribution of receiving nothing but evil from those he has unrighteously rewarded, and nothing but good from her whom, he bitterly feels, he has cruelly wronged. But the punishment of the wrong-doer is only one element in the consequences of wrong; the innocent also are involved, and we get a second tragedy in the sufferings of the faithful Kent and the loving Cordelia, who, through Kent as her representative, watches over her father's safety, until at the end she appears in person to follow up her devotion to the death. When, however, the incidents making up the sufferings of Lear, of Kent, and of Cordelia are taken out of the main plot, there is still a considerable section left—that which is occupied with the mutual intrigues of Goneril and Regan, intrigues ending in their common ruin. This constitutes a third tragedy which, it will be seen, is as necessary to the solution of our problem as the other two. To place power in the hands of the bad is an injury not only to others, but also to the bad themselves, as giving fuel to the fire of their wickedness: so in the tragedy of Goneril and Regan we see evil passions placed in improper authority using this authority to work out their own destruction.

(1) *Tragedy of Lear.*

(2) *Tragedy of Cordelia and Kent.*

(3) *Tragedy of Goneril and Regan.*

An underplot on the same basis as the main plot.

To this main plot is added an underplot equally elaborate. As in *The Merchant of Venice*, the stories borrowed from two distinct sources are worked into a common design; and the interweaving in the case of the present play is perhaps Shakespeare's greatest triumph of constructive skill. The two stories are made to rest upon the same fundamental idea—that of undutifulness to old age: what Lear's daughters actually do is that which is insinuated by Edmund as his false charge against his brother.

compare i. i, fin.

i. ii. 76, &c. I have heard him oft maintain it to be fit, that, sons at perfect age, and fathers declining, the father should be as ward to the son, and the son manage his revenue.

So obvious is this fundamental connection between the main and the underplot, that our attention is called to it by a

personage in the play itself: 'he childed as I father'd,' is Edgar's pithy summary of it when he is brought into contact with Lear. But in this double tragedy, drawn from the two families of Lear and of Gloucester, the chief bond between its two sides consists in the sharp contrast which extends to every detail of the two stories. In the main plot we have a daughter, who has received nothing but harm from her father, who has unjustly had her position torn from her and given to undeserving sisters: nevertheless she sacrifices herself to save the father who did the injury from the sisters who profited by it. In the underplot we have a son, who has received nothing but good from his father, who has, contrary to justice, been advanced by him to the position of an elder brother whom he has slandered: nevertheless, he is seeking the destruction of the father who did him the unjust kindness, when he falls by the hand of the brother who was wronged by it. Thus as the main and underplot go on working side by side, they are at every turn by their antithesis throwing up one another's effect; the contrast is like the reversing of the original subject in a musical fugue. Again, as the main plot consisted in the initiation of a problem and its solution, so the underplot consists in the development of an intrigue and its consequences. The tragedy of the Gloucester family will, if stated from the point of view of the father, correspond in its parts with the tragedy in the family of Lear. It must be remembered, however, that the position of the father is different in the two cases; Gloucester is not, as Lear, the agent of the crime, but only a deceived instrument in the hands of the villain Edmund, who is the real agent; if the proper allowance be made for this difference, it will be seen that the three tragedies which make up the consequences of Lear's error have their analogies in the three tragedies which flow from the intrigue of Edmund. First, we have the nemesis on Gloucester, and this, in analogy with the nemesis on Lear, consists in receiving nothing but evil from the son

iii. vi. 117.

The main and underplot parallel and contrasted throughout.

The underplot an Intrigue Action:

involving a triple tragedy parallel with that of the main plot.

CHAP. X.

(1) *Tragedy of Gloucester.*
(2) *Tragedy of Edgar.*
(3) *Tragedy of Edmund.*

he has so hastily advanced, and nothing but good from the other son whom, he comes gradually to feel, he has unintentionally wronged. In the next place we have the sufferings of the innocent Edgar. Then, as we before saw a third tragedy in the way in which the power conferred upon Goneril and Regan is used to work out their destruction, so in the underplot we find that the position which Edmund has gained involves him in intrigues, which by the development of the play are made to result in a nemesis upon his original intrigue. And it is a nemesis of exquisite exactness: for he meets his death in the very moment of his success, at the hands of the brother he has maligned and robbed, while the father he has deceived and sought to destroy is the means by which the avenger has been brought to the scene.

Complexity of plot not inconsistent with simplicity of movement.

We have gone far enough into the construction of the plot to perceive its complexity and the principal elements into which that complexity can be analysed. Two separate systems, each consisting of an initial action and three resulting tragedies, eight actions in all, are woven together by common personages and incidents, by parallelism of spirit, and by movement to a common climax; not to speak of lesser Link Actions which assist in drawing the different stories closer together. As with plot generally, these separate elements are fully manifest only to the eye of analysis; in following the course of the drama itself, they make themselves felt only in a continued sense of involution and harmonious symmetry. It is with passion, not with plot, that the present study is concerned; and the train of passion which the common movement of these various actions calls out in the sympathy of the reader is as simple as the plot itself is intricate. In the case both of the main plot and the underplot the emotional effect rises in intensity; moreover at this central height of intensity the two merge in a common Climax. The construction of the play resembles, if such a comparison may be allowed, the patent gas-apparatus,

which secures a high illuminating power by the simple device of several ordinary burners inclined to one another at such an angle that the apexes of their flames meet in a point. So the present play contains a Centrepiece of some three scenes, marked off (at least at the commencement) decisively, in which the main and underplot unite in a common Climax, with special devices to increase its effect; the diverse interests to which our sympathy was called out at the commencement, and which analysis can keep distinct to the end, are *focussed*, so far as passion is concerned, in this Centrepiece, in which human emotion is carried to the highest pitch of tragic agitation that the world of art has yet exhibited.

from ii. iv. 290 to iii. vi. with the interruption of iii. iii, iii. v.

The different trains of passion focussed in a central Climax.

The emotional effect of the main plot rises to a climax in the madness of Lear. This, as the highest form of human agitation, is obviously a climax to the story of Lear himself. It is equally a climax to the story of Kent and Cordelia, who suffer solely through their devoted watching over Lear, and to whom the bitterest point in their sufferings is that they feel over again all that their fallen master has to endure. Finally, in the madness of Lear the third of the three tragedies, the Goneril and Regan action, appears throughout in the background as the cause of all that is happening. If we keep our eye upon this madness of Lear the movement of the play assumes the form we have so often had to notice—the regular arch. The first half of the arch, or rise in emotional strain, we get in symptoms of mental disturbance preparing us for actual madness which is to come. It is important to note the difference between passion and madness: passion is a disease of the mind, madness is a disease extending to the mysterious linking of mind and body. At the commencement Lear is dominated by the passion of imperiousness, an imperiousness born of his absolute power as king and father; he has never learned from discipline restraint of his passion, but has been accustomed to fling himself upon obstacles and see them give way before him. Now the tragical situation is

The passions of the main plot gather to a common Climax in the madness of Lear.

CHAP. X. prepared for him of meeting with obstacles which will not give way, but from which his passion rebounds upon himself with a physical shock. As thus opposition follows opposition, we see *waves* of physical, that is of hysterical, passion, sweeping over Lear, until, as it were, a tenth wave lands him in the full disease of madness.

i. iv. The first case occurs in his interview with Goneril after that which is the first check he has received in his new life, the insolence shown to his retinue. Goneril enters his presence with a frown. The wont had been that Lear frowned and all cowered before him: and now he waits for his daughter to remember herself with a rising passion ill concealed under the forced calmness with which he enquires, 'Are you our daughter?' 'Doth any here know me?' But Goneril, on the contrary, calmly assumes the position of reprover, and details her unfounded charges of insolence against her father's sober followers, until at last he hears himself desired

> By her, that else will take the thing she begs,

to disquantity his train. Then Lear breaks out:

> Darkness and devils!
> Saddle my horses; call my train together.
> Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble thee:
> Yet have I left a daughter.

In a moment the thought of Cordelia's 'most small fault' and how it had been visited upon her occurs to condense into a single pang the whole sense of his folly; and here it is that the first of these waves of physical passion comes over Lear, its physical character marked by the physical action which accompanies it:

i. iv. 292.

> O Lear, Lear, Lear!
> Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in, [*Striking his head.*
> And thy dear judgement out.

i. v. It lasts but for a moment: but it is a wave, and it will return. Accordingly in the next scene we see Lear on his journey from one daughter to the other. He is brooding

over the scene he is leaving behind, and he cannot disguise a shade of anxiety, in his awakened judgment, that some such scene may be reserved for him in the goal to which he is journeying. He is half listening, moreover, to the Fool, who harps on the same thought, that the King is suffering what he might have expected, that the other daughter will be like the first:—until there comes another of these sudden outbursts of passion, in which Lear for a moment half foresees the end to which he is being carried.

> O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven! — i. v. 49.
> Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

Imperiousness is especially attached to outward signs of reverence: it is reserved for Lear when he arrives at Regan's palace to find the messenger he has sent on to announce him suffering the indignity of the stocks. At first he will not believe that this has been done by order of his daughter and son. — ii. iv. 4.

> *Kent.* It is both he and she; — 13.
> Your son and daughter.
> *Lear.* No.
> *Kent.* Yes.
> *Lear.* No, I say.
> *Kent.* I say, yea.
> *Lear.* No, no, they would not.
> *Kent.* Yes, they have.
> *Lear.* By Jupiter, I swear, no.
> *Kent.* By Juno, I swear, ay.
> *Lear.* They durst not do't;
> They could not, would not do't; 'tis worse than murder,
> To do upon respect such violent outrage.

But he has to listen to a circumstantial account of the insult, and, further, reminded by the Fool that

> Fathers that wear rags
> Do make their children blind,

he comes at last to realise it all,—and then there sweeps over him a third and more violent wave of hysterical agitation.

> O, how this mother swells up toward my heart! — 56.
> Hysterica passio, down, thou climbing sorrow,
> Thy element's below!

CHAP. X. ii. iv. 89.

He has mastered the passion by a strong effort: but it is a wave, and it will return. He has mastered himself in order to confront the culprits face to face: his altered position is brought home to him when they refuse to receive him. And the refusal is made the worse by the well-meant attempt of Gloucester to palliate it, in which he unfortunately speaks of the 'fiery quality' of the duke.

Lear. Vengeance! plague! death! confusion!
Fiery! what quality!

Nothing is harder than to endure what one is in the habit of inflicting on others; it was Lear's own 'fiery quality' by which he had been accustomed to scorch all opposition out of his way; now he has to hear another man's 'fiery quality' quoted to him. But this outburst is only momentary; the very extremity of the case seems to calm Lear, and he begins himself to frame excuses for the duke, how sickness and infirmity neglect the 'office' to which health is bound—until his eye lights again upon his messenger sitting in the stocks, and the recollection of this deliberate affront brings back again the wave of passion.

122. O me, my heart, my rising heart! but, down!

Lear had a strange confidence in his daughter Regan. As we see the two women in the play, Regan appears the more cold-blooded; nothing in Goneril is more cruel than Regan's

204. I pray you, Father, being weak, seem so;

or her meeting Lear's 'I gave you all' with the rejoinder,

253. And in good time you gave it.

But there was something in Regan's personal appearance that belied her real character; her father says to her in this scene:

173. Her eyes are fierce, but thine
Do comfort and not burn.

Judas betrayed with a kiss, and Regan persecutes her father in tears. But Regan has scarcely entered her father's presence when the trumpet announces the arrival of Goneril, and Lear has to see the Regan in whom he is trusting take Goneril's hand before his eyes in token that she is making common cause with her. When following this the words 'indiscretion,' 'dotage,' reach his ear there is a momentary swelling of the physical passion within: CHAP. X. 185. 197.

> O sides, you are too tough; 200.
> Will you yet hold!

He has mastered it for the last time: for now his whole world seems to be closing in around him; he has committed his all to the two daughters standing before him, and they unite to beat him down, from fifty knights to twenty-five, from twenty-five to ten, to five, until the soft-eyed Regan asks, 'What need one?' A sense of crushing oppression stifles his anger, and Lear begins to answer with the same calmness with which the question had been asked: from 233.

> O, reason not the need: our basest beggars
> Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
> Allow not nature more than nature needs,
> Man's life's as cheap as beast's: thou art a lady;
> If only to go warm were gorgeous,
> Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,
> Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need,—

He breaks off at finding himself actually pleading: and the blinding tears come as he recognises that the kingly passion in which he had found support at every cross has now deserted him in his extremity. He appeals to heaven against the injustice.

> You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!
> You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,
> As full of grief as age; wretched in both!
> If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
> Against their father, fool me not so much

CHAP. X.

> To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,
> And let not women's weapons, water-drops,
> Stain my man's cheeks!

The prayer is answered; the passion returns in full flood, and at last brings Lear face to face with the madness which has threatened from a distance.

> No, you unnatural hags,
> I will have such revenges on you both,
> That all the world shall—I will do such things,—
> What they are, yet I know not; but they shall be
> The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep;
> No, I'll not weep:
> I have full cause of weeping; but this heart
> Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,
> Or ere I'll weep. O fool, I SHALL go mad!

ii. iv. 290. *The storm marks off the Centre-piece of the play.*

As Lear with these words rushes out into the night, we hear the first sound of the storm—the storm which here, as in *Julius Cæsar*, will be recognised as the dramatic background to the tempest of human emotions; it is the signal that we have now entered upon the mysterious Centrepiece of the play, in which the gathering passions of the whole drama are to be allowed to vent themselves without check or bound. And it is no ordinary storm: it is a night of bleak winds sorely ruffling, of cataracts and hurricanoes, of curled waters swelling above the main, of thought-executing-fires, and oak-cleaving thunderbolts; a night

iii. i. 12, &c.

> wherein the cub-drawn bear would couch,
> The lion and the belly-pinched wolf
> Keep their fur dry.

And all of it is needed to harmonise with the whirlwind of human passions which finds relief only in outscorning its fury. The purpose of the storm is not confined to this of marking the emotional climax: it is one of the agencies which assist in carrying it to its height. Experts in mental disease have noted amongst the causes which convert mere mental excitement into actual madness two leading ones, external physical shocks and imitation. Skakespeare has made use of both in

the central scenes of this play. For the first, Lear is exposed without shelter to the pelting of the pitiless storm, and he waxes wilder with its wildness. Again when all this is at its height he is suddenly brought into contact with a half-naked Tom o'Bedlam. This gives the final shock. So far he had not gone beyond ungovernable rage; he had not lost self-consciousness, and could say, 'My wits begin to turn'; but the sight of Edgar completely unhinges his mind, and hallucinations set in; a moment after he has seen him the spirit of imitation begins to work, and Lear commences to strip off his clothes. Thus perfect is the regular arch of effect which is connected with Lear's madness. We have its gradual rise in the waves of hysterical passion which ebbed after they had flowed, until, at the point separating the Centrepiece from the rest of the play, Lear's 'O fool I *shall* go mad' seems to mark a change from which he never goes back. Through these central scenes exposure to the storm is fanning his passion more and more irretrievably into madness; at the exact centre of all, imitation of Edgar comes to make the insanity acute. After the Centrepiece Lear disappears for a time, and when we next see him agitation has declined into what is more pathetic: the acute mania has given place to the pitiful spectacle of a shattered intellect; there is no longer sharp suffering, but the whole mind is wrecked, gleams of coherence coming at intervals to mark what a fall there has been; the strain upon our emotions sinks into the calm of hopelessness.

Lear's madness.

iii. i. 3; iii. ii, &c. iii. iv, from 39.

iii. iv. 66.

iii. iii. 39.

Decline after the Centrepiece from violent madness to shattered intellect.

iv. vi. 81. compare iv. vi. 178; v. iii. 314.

> He hates him much
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer.

But who is this madman with whom Lear meets at the turning-point of the play? It is Edgar, the victim of the underplot, whose life has been sought by his brother and father until he can find no way of saving himself but the disguise of feigned madness. This feigned madness of

The passions of the underplot gather to a common Climax in the madness of Edgar.

CHAP. X.

Edgar, as it appears in the central scenes, serves as emotional climax to the underplot, just as the madness of Lear is the emotional climax of the main plot. Edgar's madness is obviously the climax to the tragedy of his own sufferings, but it is also a central point to the movement of the other two tragedies which with that of Edgar make up the underplot. One of these is the nemesis upon Gloucester, and this, we have seen, is double, that he receives good from the son he has wronged and evil from the son he has favoured. The turning-point of such a nemesis is reached in the Hovel Scene, where Gloucester says:

III. iv. 170.

> I'll tell thee, friend,
> I am almost mad myself: I had a son,
> Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,
> But lately, very late: I loved him, friend:
> No father his son dearer: truth to tell thee,
> This grief hath crazed my wits!

He says this in the presence of the very Edgar, disguised under the form of the wretched idiot he hardly marks. Edgar now learns how his father has been deceived; in his heart he is re-united to him, and from this point of re-union springs the devotion he lavishes upon his father in the affliction that presently falls upon him. On the other hand, that which brings Gloucester to this Hovel Scene, the attempt to save the King, is betrayed by Edmund, who becomes thereby the cause of the vengeance which puts out his father's eyes. Thus from this meeting of the mad Edgar with the mad Lear there springs at once the final stroke in the misery Gloucester suffers from the son he has favoured, and the beginning of the forgiving love he is to experience from the son he has wronged: that meeting then is certainly the central climax to the double nemesis which makes up the Gloucester action. The remaining tragedy of the underplot embraces the series of incidents by the combination of which the success of Edmund's intrigue becomes gradually converted into the nemesis which punishes it. Now the

compare III. iii. 15.

III. iii. 22; III. vii.

squalid wretchedness of a Bedlamite, together with the painful strain of supporting the assumed character amidst the conflicting emotions which the unexpected meeting of the Hovel Scene has aroused, represent the highest point to which the misery resulting from the intrigue can rise. At the same time the use Edgar makes of this madness after hearing Gloucester's confession is to fasten himself in attendance upon his afflicted father, and proves in the sequel the means by which he is brought to be the instrument of the vengeance that overtakes Edmund. The central climax of a tragedy like this of intrigue and nemesis cannot be more clearly marked than in the incident in which are combined the summit of the injury and the foundation of the retribution. Thus all three tragedies which together make up the resultant of the intrigue constituting the underplot reach their climax of agitation in the scene in which Lear and Edgar meet.

iv. i, &c.

The Centrepiece a duet, or by the addition of the Fool, a trio of madness.

It appears, then, that the Centrepiece of the play is occupied with the contact of two madnesses, the madness of Lear and the madness of Edgar; that of Lear gathering up into a climax trains of passion from all the three tragedies of the main plot, and that of Edgar holding a similar position to the three tragedies of the underplot. Further, these madnesses do not merely go on side by side; as they meet they mutually affect one another, and throw up each other's intensity. By the mere sight of the Bedlamite, Lear, already tottering upon the verge of insanity, is driven really and incurably mad; while in the case of Edgar, the meeting with Lear, and through Lear with Gloucester, converts the burden of feigning idiocy from a cruel stroke of unjust fate into a hardship voluntarily undergone for the sake of ministering to a father now forgiven and pitied. And so far as the general effect of the play is concerned this central Climax presents a terrible *duet of madness*, the wild ravings and mutual interworkings of two distinct strains of insanity, each answering

CHAP. X.

and outbidding the other. The distinctness is the greater as the two are different in kind. In Lear we have the madness of passion, exaggeration of ordinary emotions; Edgar's is the madness of idiocy, as idiocy was in early ages when the cruel neglect of society added physical hardship to mental affliction. In Edgar's frenzy we trace rapid irrelevance with gleams of unexpected relevance, just sufficient to partly answer a question and go off again into wandering; a sense of ill-treatment and of being an outcast; remorse and thoughts as to close connection of sin and retribution; visions of fiends as in bodily presence; cold, hunger: these alternating with mere gibberish, and all perhaps within the compass of a few lines.

iii. iv. 51. Who gives anything to poor Tom? whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, and through ford and whirlipool, o'er bog and quagmire; that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made him proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor. Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold,—O, do de, do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: there could I have him now,—and there,—and there again, and there.

But this is not all. When examined more closely this Centrepiece exhibits not a duet but a *trio of madness*; with the other two there mingles a third form of what may be called madness, the professional madness of the court fool.

Institution of the court fool.

This court fool or jester is an institution of considerable interest. It seems to rest upon three mediæval and ancient notions. The first is the barbarism of enjoying personal defects, illustrated in the large number of Roman names derived from bodily infirmities, Varus the bandy-legged, Balbus the stammerer, and the like; this led our ancestors to find fun in the incoherence of natural idiocy, and finally made the imitation of it a profession. A second notion underlying the institution of a jester is the connection to the ancient mind between madness and inspiration; the same

Greek word *entheos* stands for both, and to this day the idiot of a Scotch village is believed in some way to see further than sane folk. A third idea to be kept in mind is the mediæval conception of wit. With us wit is weighed by its intrinsic worth; the old idea, appearing repeatedly in Shakespeare's scenes, was that wit was a mental game, a sort of battledore and shuttlecock, in which the jokes themselves might be indifferent since the point of the game lay in keeping it up as smartly and as long as possible. The fool, whose title and motley dress suggested the absence of ordinary sense or propriety, combines in his office all three notions: from the last he was bound to keep up the fire of badinage, even though it were with witless nonsense; from the second he was expected at times to give utterance to deep truths; and in virtue of the first he had license to make hard hits under protection of the 'folly' which all were supposed to enjoy.

> He that a fool doth very wisely hit,
> Doth very foolishly, although he smart,
> Not to seem senseless of the bob.

The institution adapted to modern times in Punch.

The institution, if it has died out as a personal office attached to kings or nobles, has perhaps been preserved by the nation as a whole in a form analogous to other modern institutions: the all-embracing newspaper has absorbed this element of life, and Mr. Punch is the national jester. His figure and face are an improvement on the old motley habit; his fixed number of pages have to be filled, if not always with wit, yet with passable padding: no one dare other than enjoy the compliment of his notice, under penalty of showing that 'the cap has fitted'; and certainly Mr. Punch finds ways of conveying to statesmen criticisms to which the proprieties of parliament would be impervious. The institution of the court fool is eagerly utilised by Shakespeare, and is the source of some of his finest effects: he treats it as a sort of chronic Comedy, the function of which may be described as that of trans-

CHAP. X.

lating deep truths of human nature into the language of laughter.

In applying, then, this general view of the court fool to the present case we must avoid two opposite errors. We must not pass over all his utterances as unmeaning folly, nor, on the other hand, must we insist upon seeing a meaning in everything that he says: what truth he speaks must be expected to make its appearance amidst a cloud of nonsense.

The function of the Fool in Lear is to keep before us the original problem:

Making this proviso we may lay down that the function of the Fool in *King Lear* is to keep vividly before the minds of the audience (as well as of his master) the idea at the root of the main plot—that unstable moral equilibrium, that unnatural distribution of power which Lear has set up, and of which the whole tragedy is the rebound. In the first scene

i. iv.

in which he appears before us he is, amid all his nonsense, harping upon the idea that Lear has committed the folly of trusting to the gratitude of the ungrateful, and is reaping the inevitable consequences. As he enters he hands his coxcomb, the symbol of folly, to the King, and to Kent for taking the King's part. His first jingling song,

> Have more than thou showest,
> Speak less than thou knowest,
> Lend less than thou owest, &c.,

is an expansion of the maxim, Trust nobody. And however irrelevant he becomes, he can in a moment get back to this root idea. They tell him his song is nothing:

> *Fool.* Then 'tis like the breath of an unfee'd lawyer; you gave me nothing for 't. Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?
> *Lear.* Why, no, boy; nothing can be made out of nothing.
> *Fool* [*to Kent*]. Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool.

i. i. 92.

'Nothing will come of nothing' had been the words Lear had used to Cordelia; now he is bidden to see how they have become the exact description of his own fortune. No wonder Lear exclaims, 'A bitter fool!'

Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet one?

Lear. No, lad; teach me.

Fool. That lord that counsell'd thee
To give away thy land,
Come place him here by me,
Do thou for him stand:
The sweet and bitter fool
Will presently appear;
The one in motley here,
The other found out there.

Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?

Fool. All thy other titles thou hast given away; that thou wast born with.

Again and again he turns to other topics and comes suddenly back to the main thought.

Fool. Prithee, nuncle, keep a schoolmaster that can teach thy fool to lie: I would fain learn to lie. 1. iv. 195.

Lear. An you lie, sirrah, we'll have you whipped.

Fool. I marvel what kin thou and thy daughters are: they'll have me whipped for speaking true, thou'lt have me whipped for lying; and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace. I had rather be any kind o' thing than a fool: and yet I would not be thee, nuncle; thou hast pared thy wit o' both sides, and left nothing i' the middle: here comes one o' the parings.

It is Goneril who enters, and who proceeds to state her case in the tone of injury, detailing how the order of her household state has been outraged, but ignoring the source from which she has received the power to keep up state at all: what she has omitted the Fool supplies in parable, as if continuing her sentence— 1. iv. 207.

For, you trow, nuncle,
The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long,
That it's had it head bit off by it young,

and then instantly involves himself in a cloud of irrelevance,

So, out went the candle, and we were left darkling.

In the scene which follows, the Fool is performing a variation on the same theme: the sudden removal from one sister 1. v.

CHAP. X. to the other is no real escape from the original foolish situation.

i. v. 8. *Fool.* If a man's brains were in 's heels, were 't not in danger of kibes?
Lear. Ay, boy.
Fool. Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall ne'er go slip-shod.

To say that Lear is in no danger of suffering from brains in his heels is another way of saying that his flight is folly. He goes on to insist that the other daughter will treat her father 'kindly,' that 'she's as like this as a crab's like an apple.' His laying down that the reason why the nose is in the middle of the face is to keep the eyes on either side of the nose, and that the reason why the seven stars are no more than seven is 'a pretty reason—because they are not eight,' suggests (if it be not pressing it too far) that we must not look for depth where there is only shallowness—the mistake Lear has made in trusting to the gratitude of his daughters. And the general thought of Lear's original folly he brings out, true to the fool's office, from the most unlikely beginnings.

i. v. 26. *Fool.* Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?
Lear. No.

'Nor I neither,' answers the Fool, with a clown's impudence; 'but,' he adds, 'I can tell why a snail has a house.'

Lear. Why?
Fool. Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his daughters.

iii. iv. 1–128. All through the scene in front of the stocks the Fool is harping on the folly of expecting gratitude from such as Goneril and Regan. It is fathers who bear bags that see their children kind; the wise man lets go his hold on a great wheel running down hill, but lets himself be drawn after by the great wheel that goes up the hill; he himself, the Fool hints, is a fool for staying with Lear; to cry out at Goneril and Regan's behaviour is as unreasonable as for the cook to be impatient with the eels for wriggling; to have trusted the two

daughters with power at all was like the folly of the man that, 'in pure kindness to his horse, buttered his hay.' CHAP. X.

The one idea, then, stationary amidst all the Fool's gyrations of folly is the idea of Lear's original sin of passion, from the consequences of which he can never escape; only the idea is put, not rationally, but translated into an emotional form which makes it fit to mingle with the agitation of the central scenes. The emotional form consists partly in the irrelevance amid which the idea is brought out, producing continual shocks of surprise. But more than this an emotional form is given to the utterances of the Fool by his very position with reference to Lear. There is a pathos that mingles with his humour, where the Fool, a tender and delicate youth, is found the only attendant who clings to Lear amid the rigour of the storm, labouring with visibly decreasing vigour to out-jest his master's heart-struck injuries, and to keep up holiday abandon amidst surrounding realities. Throughout he is Lear's best friend, and epithets of endearment are continually passing between them: he has been Cordelia's friend (as Touchstone was the friend of Rosalind), and pined for Cordelia after her banishment. Nevertheless he is the only one who can deliver hard thrusts at Lear, and bring home to him, under protection of his double relation to wisdom and folly, Lear's original error and sin. So faithful and so severe, the Fool becomes an outward conscience to his master: he keeps before Lear the unnatural act from which the whole tragedy springs, but he converts the thought of it into the emotion of self-reproach.

but in an emotional form as adapted to the agitation of the Centre-piece.

iii. i. 16; iii. ii. 10, 25, 68; iii. iv. 80, 150.

i. iv. 107; iii. ii. 68, 72, &c.

i. iv. 79.

Our total result then is this. The intricate drama of *King Lear* has a general movement which centres the passion of the play in a single Climax. Throughout a Centrepiece of a few scenes, against a background of storm and tempest is thrown up a tempest of human passion—a madness trio, or mutual play of three sorts of madness, the real madness of passion in Lear, the feigned madness of idiocy in Edgar, and

Summary.

CHAP. X. the professional madness of the court fool. When the elements of this madness trio are analysed, the first is found to gather up into itself the passion of the three tragedies which form the main plot; the second is a similar climax to the passion of the three tragedies which make up the under-plot; the third is an expression, in the form of passion, of the original problem out of which the whole action has sprung. Thus intricacy of plot has been found not inconsistent with simplicity of movement, and from the various parts of the drama the complex trains of passion have been brought to a focus in the centre.

XI.

'Othello' as a Picture of Jealousy and Intrigue.

A Study in Character and Plot.

CHAP. XI.

Connection of Character and Plot in Othello.

IN no play of Shakespeare is the organic connection between Character and Plot so simply and so emphatically marked as in the play of *Othello*. Viewed from the side of Character, its personages fall into a magnificent piece of Grouping around the passion of Suspicious Jealousy[1]. When we turn to analyse the Plot, this is found to be a network of Intrigue—the mode of action in which Jealousy most naturally finds vent; and the intrigues, however elaborate, are by the movement of the plot drawn to a simple culmination which remains for all literature the typical climax of tragic jealousy.

Character-Grouping founded upon Jealousy.

The leading personages in *Othello* are, in character, variations of a single passion, suspicious jealousy, and their position in the play is exactly determined by their relation

[1] It is important to remember that in Shakespearean English the word 'jealousy' comes nearer in meaning to 'suspicion' than in modern usage. Compare *Oth.* iii. iii. 198: 'not jealous nor secure;' or *Henry V*, ii. ii. 126:

> O, how hast thou with jealousy infected
> The sweetness of affiance!

Compare Scotch usage: 'They *jaloused* the opening of our letters at Fairport.' (*Antiquary*, chapter xxiv.)

CHAP. XI. to this passion. Othello himself represents jealousy in a trusting nature:

> one not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
> Perplex'd in the extreme.

Iago sees truly that his leader's 'unbookish jealousy' must construe things wrong; how unbookish it is would be sufficiently proved by the wearisome iteration with which he applies the epithet 'honest' to Iago. On the contrary, Iago's is the jealousy of a nature that believes in nothing; in his soliloquies he lets it appear that he suspects both Othello and Cassio to have tampered with his wife, and this obviously baseless jealousy is largely the motive of Iago's action, as the jealousy of other persons is mainly the instrument with which he works. Both his subordinate agents hold their place in the play by the same thread of connection. In Roderigo we have the ordinary jealousy of a love intrigue utilised by the skill of Iago; and where the virtue of Desdemona makes Iago's scheme too transparent in its weakness, it is only by working on Roderigo's jealousy of Cassio that the plotter is able to retain his tool. Bianca strikes a yet lower key—the jealousy of a vulgar liaison. Her connection is with only a single phase of the action, the misunderstanding in the matter of the handkerchief. For this link in the plot it is merely necessary for her to appear at two points: at the first it is jealousy that brings her to look for Cassio, and reproach him for long absence—when he gives her the handkerchief; and it is jealousy that brings her again to fling it back at him in the sight of the concealed Othello. Finally, Cassio and Desdemona are prominent in the play by the *utter* absence of the passion. This appears negatively in Cassio; for example, when Iago, inviting him to the drinking-bout, insinuates that Desdemona even is susceptible, Cassio in sheer simplicity misunderstands all he says. In Desdemona the absence of jealousy and suspicion amounts to a phenomenon, and when we come to trace the

ii. i. 304, 316; &c.

ii. i. 215.

ii. iii. 12–33.

story we shall see how it is her simplicity which is for ever betraying her. Such are the varieties of form, positive and negative, which jealousy assumes in these various personages, and they thus blend themselves into a character-group round this passion as the central point of view.

Plot founded on Intrigue.

What Jealousy is to the Character of this play Intrigue is to its Plot. Shakespeare's plots are, almost without exception, distinguished by their complexity: the fulness of life he has drawn within the field of his drama can have design given to it only by a plan of system within system. He keeps going side by side several different stories, or interests, or technically, 'actions,' and the triumph of his plot-handling is the exquisite symmetry between these different drifts of events, and the way in which they move on to a common consummation. The analysis of such plot falls into two divisions: Economy views the play as a whole, and the relation of its various parts to one another; Movement traces the development of the total effect through the successive scenes, from imperfect to complete. Whether we review the Economy or the Movement one idea is found to animate the present play. Its plot presents a number of separate intrigues or other 'actions,' gradually by the course of the play merged in one, which rushes on to a tragic consummation of Jealousy, and a reaction of Nemesis on the Intriguer.

I distinguish in the play eight of these 'actions,' or separate trains of incident.

Economy of the Plot. Three actions: Bianca, iii. iv. 169; iv. i. 152, 82–219; v. i. 73.

The first, and slightest, is the illicit liaison between Bianca and Cassio. It appears in no more than four incidents of the story; twice Bianca appears to reproach her lover; once the tie between the two is made a subject of conversation between Cassio and Iago, in order that the by-play of this conversation may be seen by and deceive the concealed Othello; and yet again accident brings Bianca to the spot where her lover has just fallen wounded. Yet slight as this liaison is,—a mere matter of course for an Italian gentleman of that corrupt

CHAP. XI. age,—Shakespeare must needs give it a touch of individuality. He has reversed the usual relations of mistress and lover; the pretty Bianca, who no doubt has been cruel to many adorers in her time, has now to feel the slights of the still more handsome Cassio; she is the one genuinely in love, and it is Cassio who *se laisse aimer*. Moreover, it is a tragic action; for though the two know no evil in the bond which has united them, yet it comes to an end with the arrest of Bianca on the false suspicion of murdering her lover, and as she is borne off in custody she has to hear from the wife of Iago the plain language which conveys the honest matron's opinion of loose life.

Roderigo, The second action is Roderigo's pursuit of Desdemona. No name can be given to it worthier than 'pursuit.' Roderigo is merely a Venetian youth without parts or character, a typical man about town, one who is no fool, as he thinks, yet has just wit enough to be used by Iago for his own purposes. He has in due course fallen head over heels in love with the great beauty of Venice. It is hardly necessary to remark that the passion is all on one side. There is nothing to show that Desdemona so much as knows of Roderigo's existence; certain it is that she never once speaks to him,

i. i. 95. nor he to her, in the whole play. Roderigo had indeed got as far as Desdemona's father, but only to be warned off the premises as one not fit to pay addresses to Brabantio's daughter. It is true that the shock of Desdemona's elopement with Othello, announced to her father by Roderigo, throws him for a time into the arms of Brabantio, but only on the principle that misfortune makes strange bedfellows; and we must understand it only as a measure of Brabantio's disgust at Othello, that he turns to Roderigo with the words,

i. i. 176. 'O, would you had had her!' The whole of this action is simply a piece of amorous hunting. Yet it has a tragic dignity given to it, for it costs poor Roderigo his life.

Third in order I place that which is the main action of

Othello and Desdemona.

the whole play,—the love of Othello and Desdemona. Not only does this remain as one of the world's most tragic stories—

> O, the pity of it! the pity of it!

but it further stands out as one of the great fundamental types of love. It is the love that attracts contraries into the closest of bonds. Desdemona is above all things the 'gentle' Desdemona—

> A maiden never bold;
> Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
> Blush'd at herself.

She is essentially domestic:

> So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd
> The wealthy curled darlings of our nation.

Yet she is drawn to the 'thick-lipped,' 'sooty' Moor, who is in Venetian eyes the type of ugliness, the battered soldier whose only charms are his scars from disastrous chances and moving accidents by flood and field, and the 'rude speech' which tells of them.

> For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
> Till now some nine moons wasted, they have used
> Their dearest action in the tented field,
> And little of this great world can I speak,
> More than pertains to feats of broil and battle.

True, he is the great warrior of his age, whose genius haughty Venice is glad to purchase. And the quiet life drinks in the story of the life of action, until the opposites run together with a shock, and Desdemona is the one to speak the first word of wooing. Yet, opposites though they be, they have one heritage in common, which plays a great part in their characters and their fate. Their common quality is utter simplicity. Like Siegfried, who had learned everything but how to fear, so Othello with all his knocking about the world has never learned how to suspect. Desdemona thinks

i. iii. 164.

CHAP. XI. that the sun where Othello was born had drawn from him all such humours as jealousy; and must not we think so too
II. iii. 6, &c. when we find him throughout the play treating Iago as his type of honesty? And a like absence of suspiciousness betrays Desdemona into acts that look equivocal. If we knew nothing of the plot, we should feel a note of danger in her enthusiastic sympathy:

> My lord shall never rest;
> I 'll watch him tame, and talk him out of patience;
> His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
> I 'll intermingle everything he does
> With Cassio's suit.

When language has been used to her that there is no misunderstanding, she asks her attendant:

> Dost thou in conscience think,—tell me, Emilia,—
> That there be women do abuse their husbands
> In such gross kind?

It is like seething a kid in its own mother's milk when Iago trades upon this simple unsuspiciousness in order to rouse a fiend of jealousy. Yet it is only too easily intelligible. To such simplicity of nature human character appears only simple; men must be classified as sheep or goats; there is good and evil only, without fine shadings or neutral colours, without compromises or allowances. Let Desdemona once appear guilty, and all the whiteness of her soul is the white hypocrisy that makes the black all the blacker. So the true love of Othello and Desdemona ends in murder and suicide: though even these are scarcely more terrible than for such a love to end in jealousy.

Four Intrigues of Iago.

All these three actions are trains of affairs moving on side by side when the play opens. We now come to four actions which are conscious intrigues, all carried on by the master-plotter Iago. The first is Iago's intrigue against Roderigo, which is as simple as intrigue can be; it is merely the sharper's planning to get all the money he can out of his

dupe and then get rid of him. When Desdemona is married beyond the possibility of undoing, Iago tells the disappointed suitor, 'I could never better stead thee than now.' CHAP. XI. I. iii. 344.

> Put money in thy purse; follow thou the wars; defeat thy favour with an usurped beard; I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor,—put money in thy purse,—nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration:—put but money in thy purse. These Moors are changeable in their wills:—fill thy purse with money:—the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated . . . she must have change, she must: therefore put money in thy purse.

So Roderigo cheers up and goes to sell his land, while Iago soliloquises:

> Thus do I ever make my fool my purse.

When the orange has been sucked dry it is naturally thrown away, and so in the fifth act Iago soliloquises:

> Live Roderigo, V. i. 14.
> He calls me to a restitution large
> Of gold and jewels that I bobbed from him,
> As gifts to Desdemona;
> It must not be.

Accordingly, when other means have failed, he seizes a favourable opportunity for stabbing Roderigo. The whole affair is quite simple.

Against Cassio Iago has, not one, but two, distinct intrigues, animated by two separate motives. Iago's first grudge is that all the interest he had made among the great ones of Venice had been insufficient to gain him the post of Othello's lieutenant, which had instead fallen to a foreigner.

> And what was he?
> Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
> One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
> A fellow almost damned in a fair wife;

CHAP. XI.

That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoric,
Wherein the toged consuls can propose
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election:
And I, of whom his eyes had seen the proof
At Rhodes, at Cyprus and on other grounds
Christian and heathen, must be be-leed and calmed
By debitor and creditor: this counter-caster,
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I—God bless the mark!—his Moorship's ancient.

Disappointed rivalry, pressure of debts, the combined prejudices of practical man against doctrinaire and of Venetian against Florentine, make up a formidable motive for action in a nature such as Iago's. Accordingly he has studied the new-comer until he has found the weak side by which he may be betrayed. This weak side, it is worth noting, is not the moral vice of intemperance so much as the physical weakness of stomach which makes a small dose of alcohol produce upon Cassio the effect that excess produces on other men. Cassio drinks most unwillingly, and in circumstances which made refusal almost impossible; but the poison acts on him instantly, and he is betrayed into unmilitary conduct which Iago adroitly magnifies into a brawl. So his purpose is gained, and a little past the middle of the play Iago hears the welcome words, 'Now art thou my lieutenant.' But it is only after this point that we are allowed to see a wider and more fundamental antagonism between Cassio and the villain of our play. Iago in the fifth act mutters:

ii. iii. 34–53.

iii. iii. 478.

If Cassio do remain,
He hath a daily beauty in his life
That makes me ugly . . .

It is the primitive feud of light and darkness, reinforced by a suspicion—for Iago turns his foul suspicions in all impossible directions—that Cassio has played him false with Emilia, that brings Iago to the conclusion that Cassio must die.

ii. i. 316.

The same antagonism of light and darkness makes Iago hate the Moor, and there is the same additional motive of suspicions, grounded on nothing but his own foul thoughts, that by Othello also he has been wronged in his wedded life. CHAP. XI.

i. iii. 392; ii. i. 304; iv. ii. 145.

Emilia. The Moor's abused by some most villainous knave.
. . . . . Some such squire he was
That turned your wit the seamy side without,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

Iago has said of this in soliloquy:—

I know not if't be true;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do as if for surety.

By the end of the next act the feeling has grown the stronger by brooding:—

—the thought whereof
Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards;
And nothing can or shall content my soul
Till I am even'd with him, wife for wife,
Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor
At least into a jealousy so strong
That judgment cannot cure.

Here again are fine materials for an intrigue, and this constitutes one of the main actions in our plot.

We have now before us three trains of circumstances moving on independently at the opening of the play, and four evil intrigues added to them by the villainy of Iago: in all seven 'actions,' each an intelligible whole, which can be traced separately through the details of the story in the way in which an historian distinguishes movements and tendencies underlying the complex events of human life. It may assist clearness to recapitulate and number these actions:—

1. Bianca's liaison with Cassio.
2. Roderigo's pursuit of Desdemona.
3. The love of Othello and Desdemona.

CHAP. XI.

4. Iago's intrigue against Roderigo.
5. Iago's intrigue to gain Cassio's place.
6. Iago's intrigue to get rid of Cassio altogether.
7. Iago's intrigue to destroy the happiness of Othello and Desdemona.

But the dramatic interest of Economy finds its highest satisfaction in watching these separate actions become united; in seeing how, by a series of dramatic devices, one after another they are drawn together, and merged in one common movement to a goal of tragic ruin.

Economic devices linking the actions together.

The first of these devices is that Iago, having it as a fixed purpose to arouse jealousy in the guileless Othello, hits at last upon Cassio as the one to be made the object of these suspicions. We are allowed to see this idea gradually dawn upon Iago.

i. iii. 398.

> Cassio's a proper man; let me see now:
> . . . . . How, how?—Let's see:—
> After some time, to abuse Othello's ear
> That he is too familiar with his wife.
> He hath a person and a smooth dispose
> To be suspected, framed to make women false.

When Iago proceeds to act upon this notion he gains the economic advantage of making his evil machinations against Othello serve as the instrument of his evil purpose to ruin Cassio; in other words, Nos. 6 and 7 of our actions are now merged in one.

In carrying out this double scheme of ruining Cassio and Othello at once, by making the one the object of the other's jealousy, accident suggests to Iago a further device, which produces further amalgamation of our different actions. Cassio's ruin has already been so far compassed that he has been cast from office, and is seeking restoration; the ii. iii. 250. momentary appearance of Desdemona on the scene suggests to Iago that Cassio should be led to use Desdemona's intervention in his behalf. It will be easy to misinterpret

her warmhearted intervention as dictated by more than good-nature. By this simple device the whole force of the love between Desdemona and her lord is utilised to help forward the evil intrigue against Cassio, which we have seen to be at the same time an intrigue against Othello's happiness. Thus now No. 3 of our actions is united with Nos. 6 and 7 in one common drift. CHAP. XI.

Two more devices serve to draw in Roderigo's pursuit of Desdemona, and make this part of the general attack upon Cassio. Cassio is made the object of Roderigo's jealousy, but—that there may not be too much sameness in the devices of this drama—the suggestion this time is, not that Cassio loves Desdemona, which to Roderigo would seem a matter of course, but that Desdemona loves Cassio. II. i, from 220.

Iago. . . . Desdemona is directly in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 'tis not possible.

Iago. Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be instructed. Mark me with what violence she first loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies: and will she love him still for prating? let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed; and what delight shall she have to look on the devil?

He proceeds to dilate on Cassio's advantages of person:

The knave is handsome, young, and hath all those requisites in him that folly and green minds look after: a pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already.

Rod. I cannot believe that in her; she's full of most blessed condition.

Iago. Blessed fig's end!

Roderigo is soon sufficiently indoctrinated with this suspicion to make him bear his part in the comedy which is to present Cassio as a brawler, and hurl him from his office. But when this is accomplished the jealous suspicions still live, and a second bit of ingenuity on Iago's part utilises them to assist his deeper scheme against Cassio. A commission has arrived from Venice: affairs in Cyprus no longer need Othello, the IV. ii, from 225.

CHAP. XI. Senate consider Cassio sufficient for this government while the great general goes forward to the war in Mauretania. Iago adroitly suggests to the love-sick Roderigo that Othello will take Desdemona away with him, and that there is only one way of preventing this:—

> . . . unless his abode be lingered here by some accident: wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.
>
> *Rod.* How do you mean, removing of him?
>
> *Iago.* Why, by making him uncapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.
>
> *Rod.* And that you would have me to do?

Roderigo this time needs a good deal of persuading; but when he does give consent we have the whole force of his passion for Desdemona working into Iago's intrigues against Cassio. That is to say, No. 2 of our scheme of actions is now seen to co-operate with Nos. 5 and 6.

But this No. 6 (the attempt to make Cassio a victim of Othello's jealousy) has already been seen to have amalgamated with two other actions, Nos. 3 and 7. We have thus five of our separate trains of incidents—Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7—now merged in one, and assisting each other's course. But further: the same devices which succeeded in drawing in Roderigo as a force against Cassio have at the same time been assisting another purpose in the play—Iago's scheme of getting money out of his dupe Roderigo; for Iago sees
v. i. 15. clearly that, once Roderigo despairs of success, all his own pecuniary chances are gone, and indeed he may be called upon to make restitution. So the action we have numbered as No. 4 is now seen to be working in the same direction as the other five. There remains only one more—the affair of
iii. iv; iv. i. Bianca and Cassio. Every reader will remember how this paltry bit of low life crosses the main tragedy at just the point where it can serve as an unintended link in a terrible chain of events. Desdemona's handkerchief, dropped, given to Bianca to be altered, brought back by her in a moment of

suspicion, is made by the contrivance of the plotter to seem like a final proof of Desdemona's abandoned passions. This handkerchief device has drawn in action No. 1 into the drift of the rest; and all the actions of our scheme, from 1 to 7, are now blended in a single stream of movement.

Every reader who has in the smallest degree developed interest in plot must appreciate this triumph of dramatic economy, by which so many separate trains of action are, by a touch here and there of a great contriver, made to coalesce with one another and unite their forces, so that the author can reduce in amount the demand he has to make upon evil contrivance, and can show himself thrifty in making each device produce the maximum of results. But if the reader does not appreciate it, there is one in the play who does, and that is the arch-villain himself: for what is it but a rhapsody on dramatic economy which Iago gives us when, after hitting upon the idea of utilising Desdemona to plead for Cassio, he reflects that the very counsel he has given with a view to his dark purposes is the counsel which an honest adviser would have given to Cassio for his own sake?

The Economic effect suggested in the play itself.

ii. iii. 342.

And what's he then that says I play the villain?
When this advice is free I give, and honest,
Probal to thinking, and indeed the course
To win the Moor again? For 'tis most easy
The inclining Desdemona to subdue
In any honest suit: she's framed as fruitful
As the free elements. And then for her
To win the Moor—were't to renounce his baptism,
All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,
His soul is so enfetter'd to her love,
That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
Even as her appetite shall play the god
With his weak function. How am I then a villain
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,
Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!
When devils will the blackest sins put on,
They do suggest at first with heavenly shows,
As I do now: for whiles this honest fool

CHAP. XI.

> Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes
> And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
> I'll pour this pestilence into his ear,
> That she repeals him for her body's lust;
> And by how much she strives to do him good,
> She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
> So will I turn her virtue into pitch,
> And out of her own goodness make the net
> That shall enmesh them all.

No one will suppose that Iago has any other interest in reducing the amount of evil in the world beyond this economic interest of watching one device produce two effects, and leaving the hostile forces of goodness to work his ends without his troubling to draw upon his own resources of evil.

Reaction: Nemesis upon Iago.

We have counted seven actions, and seen them unite in a tragic catastrophe. The scheme of the play includes an eighth action, or rather, reaction; the recoil of this catastrophe upon Iago himself. What is the source of this nemesis upon Iago? In part it arises from accident: his final intrigue against Cassio is only partially successful, Cassio being wounded, but not killed. But Cassio comes only to complete the retribution upon the villain of the play, which has begun before his arrival, and in another and unsuspected quarter. It is Iago's own wife Emilia whose quick woman's wit is the first to pierce the web of intrigue, and stimulated by sight of her murdered mistress she gives her suspicions vent, though at the point of her husband's sword. The principle underlying this nemesis is one of the profoundest of Shakespeare's moral ideas—that evil not only corrupts the heart, but equally undermines the judgment. To Iago is applicable the biting sentence of *Junius*: 'Virtue and simplicity have so long been synonymous that the reverse of the proposition has grown into credit, and every villain fancies himself a man of ability.' It is because he knows himself unfettered by scruples that Iago feels himself infallible,

v. ii, from 139.

and considers honest men fools; he never sees how his foul thoughts have blinded his perceptive powers, and made him blunder where simple men would have gone straight. True, he brings infinite acuteness to bear upon the details of his intrigues; but he never perceives, what the reader sees at a glance, that the whole ground of his action in these intrigues —his suspicions that Emilia has been tampered with by Cassio and Othello—is a stupid mistake, which no one with any wholesome knowledge of human nature would make. And the same want of insight into honest human nature, which made him set up his atrocious schemes, is the cause now of their failure. He thought he had foreseen everything: it never occurred to him that his wife might betray him *with nothing to gain by such betrayal*, simply from affection and horror. CHAP. XI.

> I care not for thy sword; I'll make thee known,
> Though I lost twenty lives.—Help! help, ho! help!
> The Moor hath kill'd my mistress!

In vain Iago seeks to stop her mouth; a few words put all the suspicious circumstances together, until in rage and spite Iago stabs Emilia, though the blow seals his own ruin. This detail is a fresh touch in the perfection of the nemesis upon Iago: in a sense different from what he intended he is now 'evened' with Othello, 'wife for wife.' The nemesis draws items of equal retribution from all the intrigues of Iago. It was on account of Emilia that he played the villain, and it is Emilia who betrays him. He had made a tool of Roderigo, and the contents of the dead Roderigo's pockets furnish the final links of evidence against him. His main purpose was to oust Cassio both from office and life: Cassio lives to succeed Othello as Governor, and make his first official act the superintendence of Iago's torturing.

v. ii. 308.

v. ii. 367.

I turn to the other side of plot interest—Movement: the life and development of the play through the succession of

Movement of the play.

CHAP. XI. scenes, as distinguished from the dissection of its component parts when it is considered as a whole. In this drama the movement is as simple as the economic analysis is complex. Hardly in any other play have we so direct a motive force as Iago is here; and the stages into which the development of the whole falls are both few and clear; moreover, the successive soliloquies of Iago are the author's own index to the gathering fulness of the development. We may note the usual turning-points in the general action. In the middle of the middle act comes the central turning-point, with the words:

Its turning-points.

iii. iii. 90.

> Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,
> But I do love thee! and when I love thee not,
> Chaos is come again.

The tide of Othello's love has reached its height, and from here the ebb begins. And of course it is in the fifth act that we get the outer change, or 'catastrophe,' where the tragic consummation gives place to the reaction upon Iago.

Stage of Preparation.

The first act is not so much the commencement of the movement as a preparation for it. It is devoted to bringing out the situation of the various parties at the opening of the story. This is just what a classical dramatist, tied by the unities, would merely assume, and bring it out by incidental reference. Shakespeare, on the contrary, often puts his most vivid dramatic setting into the preparatory phase of his action (witness the first acts of *Lear* and *Henry V.*); and here the marriage of Othello and Desdemona is made known with passionate emphasis. Moreover, the casting-off of his daughter by Brabantio, and her resolution to accompany her husband to the war, serve to isolate our hero and heroine from their previous surroundings; they have no world now but their mutual love, and when that is invaded it means ruin. The motive force of the action, again, appears in this act only in an embryonic stage; Iago exhibits his animus against Othello and Cassio, and begins to feel about for plots and instruments; the final words of his soliloquy

mark well the embryonic character of his purposes at present: CHAP. XI.

> I have't. It is engendered. Hell and night
> Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

Nevertheless, this act of preparation culminates in a note of warning which points to the coming development, when Brabantio, made quick-sighted by sorrow, cries to his unwelcome son-in-law:

> Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see:
> She has deceived her father, and may thee.

Stage of Transition.

The second act presents the plot in transition stage. One hundred and eighty lines of it are given to a dramatic interval, made by the transference of the parties from Venice to Cyprus. Desdemona is here separated from her husband, and the interest of plot yields to other effects: the spectacular effect of the storm (which wrecks the enemy's fleet and leaves Othello free when he arrives for home affairs), the pageant of arrival, and the thrust and parry of wit when Iago is seen in the unwonted character of a lady's man. We get back to business in the soliloquy in which Iago mocks Cassio's courtly bearing to Desdemona: II. i. 168.

> 'Tis so, indeed: if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kiss'd your three fingers so oft. . . . Very good; well kissed! an excellent courtesy! 'tis so, indeed.

Now the separate intrigues become apparent, and are being loosely drawn together. Even in the first scene Iago has made Roderigo jealous, and suggested that he should pick a quarrel with the touchy Cassio; but his purposes are still only forming, and his last words in the scene are:

> 'Tis here, but yet confused:
> Knavery's plain face is never seen till used.

Then comes Othello's proclamation of a festival, and with it II. ii.

CHAP. XI. Iago's idea of making Cassio drunk; the action has now made progress, and the lesser intrigue against Cassio is successful. But the moment of its success is the great moment of advance in the movement, when the scene, already busy
II. iii. 249. enough, culminates in an emotional shock. Othello, with gentle, regretful firmness, has just spoken the memorable words of dismissal:

> Cassio, I love thee:
> But never more be officer of mine—

when we have the stage-direction: '*Re-enter* DESDEMONA, *attended.*' Othello is in an instant transformed:

> Look, if my gentle love be not raised up!
> I'll make thee an example.

By this unexpected appearance of Desdemona not only has the love of Othello become a force that tells against Cassio, but the master-thought is flashed into Iago's mind of utilising Desdemona's intervention,—the device which more than any other carries forward the plot. He at once suggests this to Cassio, and, as soon as he is alone, bursts into the exultation already quoted. His scheme he now feels complete; and in concluding this second act he speaks not of planning, but of acting.

The plot working. In the third and fourth acts the plot is working. We may note four stages. The first is the famous Suggestion Scene.
III. iii. Iago's skill in this is a skill that soars above analysis. It is easy to note the indirectness and affected unwillingness of his hints; how he dares to sail close to the wind, admitting
145. his own tendency to over-suspiciousness, and even, when Othello begins to boil over, warning him against jealousy:

> —the green-eyed monster which doth mock
> The meat it feeds on.

Or how he covers the weakness of his actual case against
193. Desdemona until Othello is frantic with suspense, and would

sooner hear evil than hear nothing; how he recalls Brabantio's warning, and makes Othello's sure ground of trust— Desdemona's strange preference for himself—a suggestion of rank will and intemperate nature. When the suffering Othello turns upon Iago— CHAP. XI. 206, 229.

> If thou dost slander her and torture me,
> Never pray more; abandon all remorse—

Iago flings up office and everything, thus utilising Othello's outburst in order to speak from the standpoint of injured friendship. Finally, when the whole is complete, and Othello breaks into an oath of vengeance, the astute plotter allows himself to be swept away by the tempest he has raised, and kneeling down includes himself in Othello's vow. 375. 462.

In the second stage, the intermingling of the various intrigues produces a fine piece of dramatic irony. Desdemona is questioned as to the handkerchief, and seeking to evade the question—for she knows not what has become of it—she hits upon an unhappy 'happy thought,' which leads her on to pour oil on fire: iii. iv.

Des. This is a trick to put me from my suit:
Pray you, let Cassio be received again.
Oth. Fetch me the handkerchief: my mind misgives.
Des. Come, come;
You'll never meet a more sufficient man.
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. I pray, talk me of Cassio.
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. A man that all his time
Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,
Shared dangers with you,—
Oth. The handkerchief!
Des. In sooth, you are to blame.
Oth. Away!

In the third stage ocular evidence is furnished to Othello, when Iago in his presence draws gestures of amused contempt by his talk of Bianca, and Othello applies them all to iv. i.

CHAP. XI. Desdemona; and further, by an accident that not even Iago could have contrived, Bianca comes at the moment and flings down the very handkerchief itself at the feet of Cassio. The arrival of the Commission installing Cassio in Othello's place draws from the still unsuspicious Desdemona a cry of joy, and brings the blow on her cheek that shocks all the court, making the overt act from which there can be no turning
iv. ii. back. Accordingly the fourth stage merely displays a jealousy strong enough to transmute impediments into stimulants; reading Emilia's honest indignation as a procuress's brazen-facedness, and interpreting Desdemona's innocent beauty as making the deeper sin. Then comes the tragic consummation, the achievement of the minor intrigues serving as relief scenes between the long-drawn agonies of the main tragedy. The final scene of the fourth act has been a dramatic foreshadowing of the end, in the sad song of death that will haunt Desdemona as she prepares for bed on
v. ii. the fatal night. The Murder Scene freezes us with its awful calmness: Othello's belief in his wife's guilt is deep enough to give his act the deliberateness of Justice.

The Climax and Reaction.

> If you bethink yourself of any crime
> Unreconciled as yet to heaven and grace,
> Solicit for it straight . . .
> I would not kill thy unprepared spirit.

Desdemona's protestations of innocence are met with—

> Sweet soul, take heed,
> Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy death-bed.

And this is just the note of the tragic discord which is carried into the equally tragic resolution, when Emilia and the rest have poured in, and explanation is dawning

> O, I were damned beneath all depth in hell,
> But that I did proceed upon just grounds
> To this extremity.

Othello has pronounced his own doom in these words, and

when Emilia has sealed her tidings with her blood, Othello feels this more than any of those who look on horror-struck: CHAP. XI.

> This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,
> And fiends will snatch at it.

The movement has been carried from first preparation to tragic consummation; but there is still the reaction as a final stage wherein we may recover ourselves in artistic sense of satisfaction. Nemesis is satisfied over Iago, caught helplessly in toils of his own over-astute blundering. And there is time for Othello to die calmly on his own sword, amid his enemies' recognition of his 'great heart,' and having survived his shock of discovery long enough to do justice even to himself.

> Speak V. ii. 342.
> Of one that loved not wisely but too well;
> Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought
> Perplex'd in the extreme; of one whose hand,
> Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away
> Richer than all his tribe.

XII.

How The Tempest is a Drama of Enchantment.

A Study in Dramatic Colouring.

Ch. XII.

The supernatural a difficulty in art. Three modes of treatment.

SHAKESPEARE'S play, *The Tempest*, is, on the face of it, a story of Enchantment. But this Enchantment, like all other forms of the supernatural and to a greater degree than most of them, constitutes one of the standard difficulties in dramatic art. A foundation task of the artist is to give creative reality to his story. But we realise through our memories, our sympathies, our experience: now Enchantment is a thing wholly outside our experience, it has no associations of memory interweaved with it, nor has it ever appealed to our sympathies in real life. The artist who dramatises a supernatural story is perpetually facing the practical difficulty—how to bridge over the gulf between his supernatural matter and the experience of his hearers or readers. There are three modes of treatment open to a dramatist by which he may meet such a difficulty. First, he may *derationalise*, or remove as far as possible from commonplace experience, the general surroundings amidst which the supernatural is to appear. Again, he may *rationalise* the supernatural element itself, that is, give it as many points of contact as possible with thought and experience. Yet again, he may give further support to the supernatural element by uniting with it as much as possible of what is nearest akin to it in the world of reality. All three modes of treatment are combined in Shakespeare's handling of Enchantment in the present play.

(1) *Derationalisation. Background of Nature.*

To begin with, Shakespeare has prepared a suitable background for his drama of enchantment by removing its scene to a distance from busy town life, and loading it with suggestions of pure external nature—the accepted haunt of the supernatural: while associations of artificial civilisation are rigidly excluded. The scene is a desert island, impressing itself at first as uninhabitable, and almost inaccessible, the secret of a few sailors, and of ocean currents that convey men to it 'by accident most strange,' 'by providence divine,' 'by bountiful fortune.' It is guarded by a belt of fierce storms that have given a name to the play; and by a further barrier of forbidding cliffs that o'er their wave-worn basis bow, huge enough to contain deep nooks in which a king's ship may lie hid. Yet the island is of wondrous charm when the boundary is once passed: it is of a 'subtle, tender, and delicate temperance'; 'the air breathes most sweetly'; the grass looks 'lush and lusty'; 'there is everything advantageous to life.' All the elements of life on the island belong to outdoor nature. For dwellings we find a cell weatherfended by a line-grove; the very prisons are the prisons of nature—the rift of a cloven pine, the knotty entrails of an oak. Labour on the island is to fetch in wood for firing, or make dams for fish; education is learning how to name the bigger light, and how the less, that burn by day and night; for food there are fresh-brook muscles, wither'd roots, and husks of acorns. By accident some artificial wealth has found its way to the island—store of glistering apparel—but it is used only as stale to catch thieves: when, however, the islanders boast of their treasures it is the treasures of nature:

A desert island, ii. i. 35–52 and i. ii. passim.

loaded with details of out-door nature.

iv. i. 187.

> I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs grow;
> And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts;
> Show thee a jay's nest, and instruct thee how
> To snare the nimble marmoset; I'll bring thee
> To clustering filberts, and sometimes I'll get thee
> Young scamels from the rock.

CH. XII.

ii. ii. 1, 18; iv. i. 180; iii. iii. 3.

v. i. 33.

ii. i. 143.

Masque of nature-wealth.

If there are drawbacks to the beauty of the landscape they are bushless and shrubless deserts, or the over-luxuriance of nature, the toothed briers, sharp furzes, pricking goss and thorns of the tropical jungle. It is just such scenery that tradition has linked with fairy life, and in the island we hear songs and conversations which fill into the scene its invisible inhabitants. Its hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves have each its band of elves; the long reaches of yellow sands are a playground for the fairies, who now chase the ebbing Neptune, and now fly him when he comes back, or take hands and foot it featly here and there, while the wild waves hush themselves to be spectators[1] of that dance, sweet sprites hum the music, and cheerful farmyard sounds of barking dogs and crowing cocks come in *pat* for the chorus. Remoteness from ordinary busy life is just the impression the island makes on the courtiers who behold it. It sets Gonzalo thinking of a golden age when civilisation should not be known: no traffic nor name of magistrate, no riches, poverty, or service, no use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil, no treason nor need for weapons, but nature should pour forth of its own kind all foison, all abundance, to feed the innocent people. And, while suggestions of nature are scattered broadcast through every scene, they are gathered to a climax in the MASQUE of the fourth act, which has for its function to pour forth a prodigal accumulation of nature-wealth. In form it is a meeting of mythical deities; but the language presents them as embodiments of the different elements of landscape. Ceres is addressed as the owner of

> Rich leas
> Of wheat, rye, barley, vetches, oats, and pease;
> Thy turfy mountains, where live nibbling sheep,
> And flat meads thatch'd with stover, them to keep;

[1] i. ii. 379. I take the punctuation of the Leopold edition which makes 'the wild waves whist' parenthetical.

> Thy banks with pioned and twilled brims,
> Which spongy April at thy hest betrims,
> To make cold nymphs chaste crowns; and thy broom-groves
> Whose shadow the dismissed bachelor loves,
> Being lass-lorn; thy pole-clipt vineyard;
> And thy sea-marge, sterile and rocky-hard,
> Where thou thyself dost air.

To her is added Iris, of the rainbow hue, diffusing honey-drops on the flowers, and crowning with her blue bow the bosky acres and the unshrubb'd down—a rich scarf for the proud earth. These unite with Juno, Queen of Heaven—the sky in its softer moods—to invoke marriage blessings on the wedded couple: but these are seen to be blessings of nature.

> Earth's increase, foison plenty,
> Barns and garners never empty,
> Vines with clustering bunches growing,
> Plants with goodly burthen bowing;
> Spring come to you at the farthest
> In the very end of harvest!

That water as a feature of scenery may not be omitted, an invocation follows to the

> Nymphs, call'd Naiads, of the windring brooks,
> With your sedg'd crowns and ever-harmless looks;

these mingle with the 'sun-burnt sicklemen of August weary' in a dance of harvest home, and so complete the Masque as a symphony of all joys of landscape, lulling us to pastoral repose with its flow of sleepy verse.

Miranda, a child of nature.

The effect is carried on from still life to the inhabitants of the island. If ever a 'child of nature' has been painted it is Miranda. Brought up from infancy on the island without ever seeing one of her sex, she has been formed by nature alone; analysis can discover in her only the elementary features of female character, unconditioned by social forms or by individuality; she might almost be called a desert island of humanity. The most distinctive note of Miranda is a simplicity that acts like a charm, and, in the wooing scenes, i. ii; iii. i, &c.

CH. XII.

needs the best acting to distinguish it from forwardness; it becomes a child-like *naïveté* of admiration when she first has the chance of seeing 'how beauteous mankind is.' Yet there is in her plenty of womanly strength: capacity for the most vivid appreciation of nature in the storm, and the 'very virtue of compassion' for those suffering in it; she exhibits an equally quick and intelligent play of emotion as she follows her father's story, and still more at the end of the scene, where she is distracted between two tendernesses. For beauty, Miranda is almost a definition of ideal—'created of every creature's best.' And her creed seems to be a simple faith in beauty: even the 'brave vessel' she doubts not contains 'noble creatures in her,' and this instinctive confidence that a fair outside must mean fairness within leaps forth to defend Ferdinand when, in the glory of his youthful beauty, he stands accused of treachery.

> There 's nothing ill can dwell in such a temple:
> If the ill spirit have so fair a house,
> Good things will strive to dwell with 't.

Caliban a natural savage.

At the opposite pole from Miranda, yet equally with her linked to the idea of nature, stands Caliban, the natural savage, or wild man of the woods: we shall see later on that this does not exhaust the description of Caliban, but this is undoubtedly one aspect of him. And in connection with this Shakespeare has thrown in an effect of a very special kind, one which, when we consider the date of the play, seems almost a flash of prophecy. The name 'Caliban'

I. ii. 321.

is an anagram for 'cannibal'; and in a single dialogue between Caliban and Prospero we have painted, in successive clauses, the whole history of the relations between savage races and civilisation, wherever at least that civilisation has not been reinforced by the elevating power of religion. First, we have the wrongs of the savage, and his dispossession by the white man:

> This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
> Which thou takest from me.

Next, we see the early and pleasant relations between the two; the white man pets the savage almost like an animal,— CH. XII.

> When thou camest first,
> Thou strokedst me and madest much of me, wouldst give me
> Water with berries in't—

There is an interchange of good offices, education on the one side, on the other reverence and gifts of natural riches:

> [Thou wouldest] teach me how
> To name the bigger light, and how the less,
> That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd thee
> And show'd thee all the qualities o' the isle,
> The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile.

But soon there appears a moral gulf between the two that forbids equal intercourse:

> Thy vile race,
> Though thou didst learn, had that in't which good natures
> Could not abide to be with.

There is nothing for it but the forced domination of the white man:

> Therefore wast thou
> Deservedly confined into this rock,
> Who hadst deserved more than a prison.

So that the gift of civilisation is turned into a curse:

> You taught me language; and my profit on't
> Is, I know how to curse!

And a later scene completes the analogy, and exhibits civilisation introducing one undeniably new gift into savage life—the gift of intoxicating drink! In this way Caliban presents the aborigines of nature crushed beneath the advance of artificial life. Yet the impartial dramatist finds an attractiveness even for him. Beside Caliban, the dregs of natural life, he places the drunken sailors, the dregs of civilisation: and as Caliban kneels to Stephano we feel that the savage is the nobler of the two, for he has not exhausted his faculty of reverence. II. ii.

So far we have been occupied with the remote nature that (2) *The Enchantment*

CH. XII.

rationalised.

Laws of Enchantment. Arbitrary causation.

is proper as a dramatic background for enchantment. But a great mass of details is occupied in presenting the enchantment itself; and so fully is it displayed that it is *rationalised*, this thing of the supernatural seeming here to fall into laws of its own, and take consistency as a system. Enchantment, in one of its aspects, is felt as the arbitrary suspension of the link between cause and effect. On the one hand a train of causes is in full array, yet the effects refuse to follow: the voyagers plunge from the burning ship into the boiling ocean, yet

i. ii. 217.

> not a hair perish'd:
> On their sustaining garments not a blemish,
> But fresher than before.

On the other hand, beside these effectless causes we see

i. ii. 466.

causeless effects: the warrior in his full strength drawing his sword to strike, yet 'charm'd from moving,' his 'spirits,

The casual permeated by design.

as in a dream, all bound up.' Again, we see the casual becoming permeated by design. The distracted scrambling of the shipwrecked courtiers on shore, each saving himself

i. ii. 219–237.

as he can, we see as the 'disposing' by Ariel of actors, each to take his proper part in a drama of which he is unconscious. Still more is this aspect of enchantment illustrated in the expulsion of Prospero from Milan.

i. ii. 144.

> They hurried us aboard a bark,
> Bore us some leagues to sea; where they prepared
> A rotten carcass of a boat, not rigg'd,
> Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats
> Instinctively had quit it: there they hoist us,
> To cry to the sea that roar'd to us, to sigh
> To the winds, whose pity, sighing back again,
> Did us but loving wrong.

What is the outcome of this multiplication of possibilities of destruction? The exposed victims are found drifting to the exact spot, to which years after their persecutors will

i. ii. 178.

drift at the precise moment of Prospero's power:—a contrived accumulation of chances eventuates in design. Yet, again,

The barrier between mind and matter breaking down.

a third aspect of enchantment is seen in the partial breaking down of the barrier between mind and matter; in the island thought and the external world can at times act upon one another without any medium of communication. When Ferdinand is musing alone on his father's loss, a voice from the unseen suddenly answers him, and sets his doubts at rest; so, when the revellers cannot recall the tune of their catch, it is played for them on an invisible pipe and tabor. Very noticeable under this head is the conclusion of the Masque. In the midst of the spectacle which Prospero has called up for his children his mind happens to revert to the forgotten conspiracy:—the unspoken thought is enough for the spirit-actors, and 'to a strange, hollow and confused noise, they heavily vanish.' Of enchantment like this, the consequences on those who suffer it are just what we might expect. For this linking of cause and effect, this 'law of uniformity,' is the foundation upon which the edifice of reason is built; it is to the scientific thinker what his creed is to the man of religion. And the helpless despair of the religionist, whose creed has been shattered, is the only parallel for the hopeless bewilderment of wanderers in the island when their confidence in natural order has broken down: they suffer 'ecstasy,' the 'subtilties of the isle' will not 'let them believe things certain'; their 'brains are useless, boil'd within their skull'; the 'tide' of understanding has ebb'd, and left the shore of reason foul and muddy.

i. ii. 396. iii. ii. 133. v. i. 60, 80, 124.

Passage from the real to the supernatural.

In handling enchantment one point of art will be to mark the process of passing from the real to the supernatural. The usage of some artists makes this passage a very gradual one; notably Goethe, in his *Walpurgis Night*, takes us by numerous and almost imperceptible stages from a scene of spring evening into the very heart of magic. Shakespeare's play recognises only a single transition stage between reality and enchantment—music, strangely linked with dreamy slumber.

CH. XII.

iii. ii. 144.

> The isle is full of noises,
> Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
> Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
> Will hum about mine ears, and sometime voices
> That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
> Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,
> The clouds methought would open and show riches
> Ready to drop upon me, that, when I waked,
> I cried to dream again.

The sleepy atmosphere seems a fixed quality of the climate, dulling the critical faculty that might question the visionary appearances. The music, however, that breaks out from time to time is always an immediate herald of some supernatural effect: it is through this gate alone[1] that we pass out into the world of enchantment.

Agencies of the supernatural. ii. ii. 3; iii. iii; iv. i. 256.

Agents from the spirit world are the instrument with which the magician works his will; and his power of inflicting harm on his enemies becomes enhanced when the very instrument of punishment can add its own quota of malice.

> For every trifle are they set upon me;
> Sometime like apes that mow and chatter at me,
> And after bite me; then like hedgehogs which
> Lie tumbling in my barefoot way, and mount
> Their pricks at my footfall; sometime am I
> All wound with adders who with cloven tongues
> Do hiss me into madness.

The spirits may be invisible, and thus distance from the enchanter is no protection:

> His spirits hear me,
> And yet I needs must curse.

Or they can take shapes, passing in monstrosity travellers' tales of mountaineers dew-lapp'd like bulls, or men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders; and they can increase the uncanniness by the inexplicable uncertainty of

[1] It is not directly mentioned in the case of the spirits that chase the drunken sailors; but I presume 'a noise of hunters' includes a blast of horns. [iv. i. 256.]

their behaviour, inviting to a supernatural banquet with gentle actions of salutation, and again with mops and mows dancing out with it ere the courtiers have had time to partake. Sometimes in the form of hounds they 'hunt' their victim, lengthening his torture by the chance they give him of flight; while, as a climax of torture, there is always held in reserve the horror of transformation.

> [We shall] all be turn'd to barnacles, or to apes
> With foreheads villanous low.

But the most important point in connection with this use of spirit agency is the wide command it suggests of the powers of nature. As modern science sees law pervading all things, so ancient magic placed every department of nature under different orders of spirits, and to have learnt the art of controlling spirits is to be able to play upon the whole gamut of nature-forces. Such is the 'rough magic' which Prospero boasts.

> By [your] aid, — v. i. 40.
> Weak masters though ye be, I have bedimm'd
> The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
> And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault
> Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder
> Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
> With his own bolt; the strong-based promontory
> Have I made shake, and by the spurs pluck'd up
> The pine and cedar: graves at my command
> Have waked their sleepers, oped and let 'em forth
> By my so potent art.

Enchantment as humanised nature.

There is yet an aspect of enchantment to be noted, one which in *The Tempest* is so developed as to become a leading interest of the play. It is a function of magic to humanise the external universe, and we have just seen personality given to some of the minor forces of nature in the spirits employed by Prospero. But the grand division of nature has always been that into the 'four elements' of Earth, Air, Fire, Water; and poetic imagination has loved to endow these with human tempers and sympathies, and an occasional

CH. XII.

appearance of human will. To a certain degree language itself retains traces of such humanising of the elements, as when we talk of a gust of passion, raging fire, greedy ocean, an earthy disposition, a fiery temper; enchantment can complete the process, and give us fully developed Elemental Beings—Sylphs of Air, Naiads of Water, Salamanders of Fire, Gnomes of Earth. The employment of these Elemental Beings is one of the common-places of magic. But Shakespeare in using it has stamped it with his own originality. He has not given us the orthodox four orders of spirits, nor has he, like Sir Walter Scott in his *Monastery*, framed a being compounded of all four elements. But, in giving us *two* Elemental Beings he has been able to suggest a deep analogy between human nature and the four elements —how these have their division into upward-tending and downward-tending, just as man has his higher and his lower nature. Shakespeare has made Ariel an Elemental Being of the higher order, identified with the upward-tending elements of Air and Fire, and with the higher nature of man; and he has made Caliban an Elemental Being of the lower order, identified with the downward-tending elements of Earth and Water, and the lower nature of man.

Elemental Beings.

Ariel upward-tending, identified with air and fire.

The identification is too detailed to be fanciful. The very name of Ariel is borrowed from air, and he is directly addressed: 'Thou, which art but air.' The identification with fire is not less complete: when describing the lightning Ariel does not say that he *set* the ship a-fire, but that the ship was 'all a-fire *with me*':

v. i. 21; i. ii. 189-304.

> Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,
> *I* flamed amazement: sometime *I*'ld divide,
> And burn in many places.

We can see in him just the qualities of air and fire. He is invisible, but, like the lightning, can take shape as he acts. Like air and fire he can penetrate everywhere, treading the ooze of the salt deep, running upon the sharp wings of the

north, doing business in the veins of earth when it is baked with frost. His natural speech is music, or waves of air. His ideas are the ideas associated with the atmosphere —liberty and omnipresence: to be 'free as mountain winds,' to fly on the bat's back merrily, couch in the cowslip's bell, live under the blossom that hangs on the bough. Like the atmosphere he *reflects* human emotions without feeling them.

> *Ariel.* If you now beheld them, your affections Would become tender. v. i. 17.
> *Prospero.* Dost thou think so, spirit?
> *Ariel.* Mine would, sir, were I human.

The analogy extends to character. Even a character can be found for the atmosphere: in place of our motive and passion it substitutes *caprice*—'the wind bloweth where it listeth.' So Ariel is 'moody,' or full of moods: and one i. ii. 244. of the most difficult incidents of the play—the quarrel i. ii. 237-between Prospero and Ariel—takes coherency, if we see in 304. it Prospero governing this incarnation of caprice *by out-capricing him*; there is an absence of moral seriousness throughout, and a curious irony, by which Prospero, under the guise of invective, is bringing out Ariel's brave endurance and delicate refinement, and in the form of threats gives his rebellious subject more than he had asked for. Finally, a single passage is sufficient to connect Ariel with i. ii. 270. the upward tendencies of human nature. We hear the reason of his cruel sufferings at the hands of Sycorax.

> For thou wast a spirit too delicate
> To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands,
> Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,
> By help of her more potent ministers,
> And in her most unmitigable rage,
> Into a cloven pine.

Nothing could more clearly paint the instincts of light oppressed by the power of darkness until the deliverer comes.

CH. XII.

Caliban downward-tending, identified with earth and water.

Over against Ariel, an Elemental Being of the higher order, is set an Elemental being of the lower order, Caliban. Caliban approaches near enough to humanity to stand, as we have seen, for the natural savage; but his origin—from the Devil and the Island Witch [1]—forbids us to rank him as human. And marks are not wanting of his identification with the downward-weighing elements of earth and water.

i. ii. 314. He is directly addressed by Prospero as, 'Thou Earth, thou'; and terms like 'monster,' 'moon-calf,' 'disproportioned shape,' so constantly applied to him, just express the uncouthness traditionally associated with the Earth-Gnome. The connection with the element of water is not so clear. Yet what else can be the significance of Shakespeare's perpetually attaching the idea *fish* to his personal appearance?

ii. ii. Wherever he is seen for the first time—by Trinculo, and in the last scene of all by the whole body of courtiers—the sight of him provokes exclamations of 'fish,' and doubts whether he is fish or man; epithets, 'fish-monster,' 'deboshed fish,' are showered upon him, and prolonged joking on the same idea is maintained while he is in presence [2]. When Trinculo calls him 'half a fish and half a monster,' the identification with Elemental Beings of both Water and Earth is complete. And he is only too evidently identified with the lower side of human nature. How animal he is the words describing his birth will sufficiently suggest:

i. ii. 282.

> — the son that she did *litter* here,
> A freckled *whelp*, hag-born.

i. ii. 349. He not only indulges the lowest passions, but gloats over them. And he is incapable of rising above them:

[1] This is distinctly said in i. ii. 319. Perhaps this is the 'one thing which she did' for which the sailors would not take her life (i. ii. 266).

[2] No such expressions are used by Stephano on his first introduction to Caliban in ii. ii. But it must be remembered that what he sees is not Caliban, but Caliban and Trinculo mixed together under the same gaberdine: hence he talks of a four-leg'd monster.

> Abhorred slave,
> Which any print of goodness wilt not take,
> Being capable of all ill.

It is true that we do not in the play itself see Caliban performing superhuman feats such as distinguish Ariel. But it must be remembered that Ariel exercises these powers only in the service of Prospero; and the corresponding source from which Caliban would derive his wonder-working strength—his mother Sycorax—is dead before the play opens. This Sycorax introduces into the drama Witchcraft, as a dark counterpart to the enchantment of Prospero that works for good. Like Prospero, she has been conveyed by force to the island, and she has ruled it by her charms before he arrives. She uses as her instruments malignant things of nature—wicked dew brushed with black raven's feather from unwholesome fen; her charms are toads, beetles, bats—creatures that hate the light; her son's curse is the infections that the sun sucks up from bog and fen and flat. She has an ugliness which is deformity alike of body and mind

i. ii. 279.

Witchcraft: dark enchantment.

i. ii. 258, 270, &c.

i. ii. 321, 340; ii. ii. 1, &c.

> —with age and envy grown into a hoop;

and—if the reading be correct—the epithet, '*blue-eyed* hag,' may suggest that worst ugliness which comes of corrupted beauty. This addition of Sycorax as a foil to Prospero completes the balance of good and evil, of light and dark; and a moral tinge is cast over the purely imaginative matter of the play, especially suitable in a drama which has to connect enchantment with the providential government of the world.

i. ii. 269.

(3) *Addition of Reality akin to Enchantment.*

Two of the modes of treatment by which an artist seeks to reduce the strain made upon our imaginative faculty by the introduction of a supernatural element into fiction have now been illustrated. But when a suitable background has been prepared for Enchantment, and when all that is possible has been done to give a rational aspect to that which is

CH. XII.

outside reason, it still remains to give increased reality to the story by exhibiting the supernatural element as intimately associated with phases of common life that already possess a hold upon our sympathies. Where then are to be found elements of common life that have kinship with enchantment? May not one of them be seen in what is described by the phrase, 'love at first sight,' which, as if miraculously, transforms the lovers to one another's eyes by the mere shock of their first meeting? Ordinary parlance suggests as much when it describes such lovers as 'smitten' with one another,—touched with an enchanter's wand, causing them to see in each other visions of perfection not perceptible to ordinary beholders. At all events, this is the idea which gives unity to the Story of Ferdinand and Miranda; it is not merely one of the hundred love stories of the Elizabethan drama, but it is an ideal study of 'love at first sight,' complete in all its stages. First we have the lovers prepared for their meeting. Miranda awakes out of a charmed sleep to behold Ferdinand for the first time:

Love at first sight. Story of Ferdinand and Miranda.

i. ii. 375; iii. i; iv. i; v. i. 172.

> *Prospero.* The fringed curtains of thine eye advance
> And say what thou seest yond.
> *Miranda.* What is't? a spirit?

So Ferdinand is drawn to the spot by supernatural music, until he sees—

> Most sure, the goddess
> On whom these airs attend.

The mutual shock follows. 'At the first sight they have changed eyes,' says the delighted Prospero, and Ferdinand confesses:

> The very instant that I saw you, did
> My heart fly to your service; there resides,
> To make me slave to it.

Accident favours the immediate betrayal of their feelings:

> *Miranda.* This
> Is the third man that e'er I saw, the first
> That e'er sighed I for . . . .

Ferdinand forgets his own danger to exclaim :

> O, if a virgin,
> And your affection not gone forth, I 'll make you
> The queen of Naples.

Trouble follows to bind them closer and closer together, and Miranda steals away to the log-house to cast the gleam of her sympathy and pretty fancies over Ferdinand's ignoble service, until it is 'fresh morning with him when she is by at night.' Finally the cloud of trouble rolls away, and the incidents of the Masque and the game of chess give us glimpses into the pure intercourse of a lovers' paradise.

Intoxication a comic counterpart to Enchantment. Comic Underplot.

Similarly, the comic side of common life contains a counterpart to enchantment in intoxication, that fills its victim with delusions alike of heart and of head. And it is this which gives unity to the Underplot of the Butler and Jester; the bottle saved from the wreck dominates it throughout. Moreover, while intoxication might be presented in many different aspects—as loathsome, as wicked, as grotesque, as dangerous—here its transforming power is dwelt upon. Caliban is transformed into a worshipper, with the drunken butler for his god. Stephano pours wine down the throat of the supposed dead moon-calf, and, by a fine stroke of detail, Shakespeare makes Caliban, at this first taste of alcohol, break from prose into blank verse, which he maintains through the scene :

ii. ii; iii. ii; iv. i. 165; v. i. 256.

> These be fine things, an if they be not sprites;
> That 's a brave god, and bears celestial liquor.

Another pull at the bottle, and the apotheosis of Stephano is far advanced :

Caliban. Hast thou not dropp'd from heaven?

Stephano. Out o' the moon, I do assure thee: I was the man i' the moon when time was.

Caliban. I have seen thee in her, and I do adore thee.

Another draught and he is kissing his god's foot, and devoting himself to his service; a few more, and he is

CH. XII. dancing on the threshold of a new dispensation. So Stephano is transformed into a king, and disposes the spoils of the clothes-line; Trinculo into an expectant viceroy; all three into an expeditionary force on the point of achieving a conquest:

> So full of valour that they smote the air
> For breathing in their faces, beat the ground
> For kissing of their feet.

With drunken infirmity of purpose they pursue their project, and are diverted by easy lures of Ariel into the paths of destruction; drunk they appear at the close under their punishment; and the last stroke in the comic underplot is the awakening of Caliban out of his enchantment:

> What a thrice-double ass
> Was I, to take this drunkard for a god.

Dramatic Colouring.

It is such treatment as this which Shakespeare has applied to *The Tempest* that entitles it to be called a Drama of Enchantment. The term does not merely mean a story of ordinary life in which superhuman beings are allowed to interpose: the world of this play is penetrated through and through by the supernatural; from the supernatural it takes its tone and colour. The very scene, insulated like a magic circle, is excluded from the commonplace, and is confined to that remoteness of nature in which distance from the real presents itself as nearness to the unseen. On the enchanted island there is nothing to break the spell by a suggestion of every-day experience, and the atmosphere is electrical with enchantment; while the inhabitants, untouched by social influences, are formed equally by nature and magic. As the story moves before us, the laws of nature—the basis of our sense of reality—appear suspended, and it is the unnatural which presents itself as a thing of law. When at last personages of familiar experience are introduced they fall wholly under the mysterious influence, and their realism—their tender loving and brutal carousing—only serves to

remind us how much of real life is permeated by Enchantment. It only remains to add how a single passage goes beyond the field of the story, and flashes the dominant colour of the play upon human life as a whole, hinting in powerful language that real life is the greatest enchantment of all. The Masque of Spirits has vanished into air,—into thin air :

> And, like the baseless fabric of this vision, — iv. i. 150.
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind!

XIII.

How the Enchantment of The Tempest presents Personal Providence.

A Study in Central Ideas.

Ch. XIII.

Theory of Central Ideas.

THE criticism that addresses itself to the function of interpreting literature was early attracted to the discovery of Central Ideas in plays and poems. The treatment, however, has not always been favourably received. For one thing, critics were found not to agree in their results: and, when different suggestions were put forward, each as a complete explanation of the same work, the suspicion naturally would arise that the interpreters had put into the plays the ideas which they professed to bring out of them. Moreover, a hasty use of terms led to the confusion between a 'central idea' and a mere lesson, or reflection, derivable (with fifty others) from the course of a story, in the way in which an accomplished preacher will draw the whole gospel out of half a clause. Thus the theory of Central Ideas has been discredited: yet surely the presumption is in its favour. The existence of some harmony binding together all varieties of detail into a unity is a fundamental conception of art: the only further question is whether, for any particular play, this unity can be formulated in words. In contending, as I am in the present work, for a strictly inductive treatment of literature, I would point out that the question of Central Ideas is, at all events, one that admits of definite treatment.

A central idea, to be worthy of the name, must be based, not upon the authority of the expounder, nor even on the beauty of the idea itself, but entirely upon the degree in which it associates itself with the details of which the play is made up—a matter which admits of accurate examination. It is, in fact, a scientific hypothesis, and the details are the phenomena which the hypothesis has to explain; none of these details must be outside the proposed unity, all of them must have a function in connection with it, and the degree to which any phase of the whole is developed must be in proportion to the closeness or remoteness of its bearing upon the central idea.

From this definition it is clear that an approach to such a central idea for *The Tempest* may be found in the Enchantment described in the preceding study, which connects itself with all parts of the play. In analysing such connection it is well to draw a distinction between direct and indirect bearing. The greater part of a work of art may be expected to connect itself directly with its central idea. But there may be some portions, the bearing of which on the central idea itself may not seem clear; but these upon examination will be found to have the closest connection with some other notion, which notion is in its turn closely related to the central idea, throwing it out by contrast, or importing some kindred conception, without which the central idea would be deficient in intelligibility or interest. So, in the play under consideration, the great mass of details has been seen to be occupied in presenting Enchantment. Another set of details, numerous and scattered through every scene, group themselves around the idea of remote nature needed as a suitable background for the Enchantment. Once more, the underplot—that is, the Story of Ferdinand and Miranda, and the Story of Caliban with the Sailors—was seen to have a bearing, though an indirect bearing, upon the same fundamental notion, the function of

CH. XIII. this underplot being, not to depict Enchantment, but to introduce some elements of real life closely akin to Enchantment. It is surely no weakening of the theory of Central Ideas, but the reverse, that the underplot should appear, not to repeat the central idea itself, but to display its counterpart in a different medium. Such treatment is just what we should expect from the analogy of the other arts: thus to relieve imagination with ordinary experience, to throw up enchantment by a contrast of real life, seems as natural as to set off vivid colouring by neutral tints, or to use a *scherzo* for separating an *adagio* from a march. Putting all these considerations together we may see that, not only is the play full in a general sense of Enchantment, but further that the distribution of its parts corresponds with their bearing on this fundamental notion.

Central idea for The Tempest: Enchantment presenting Personal Providence.

But Enchantment would seem the central idea of the play only if we confined our attention to the matter of which it is made up: when we proceed to take in the drift of the action and movement we see that the unity of the whole may be formulated in a more compact manner thus:—the presentation of Enchantment as an engine of Personal Providence. A double bond weaves the parts of this play into a whole: its action is occupied equally in throwing up a picture of Enchantment, and in working out ideas of Providence, while every single detail has an active function in elaborating one or both of these.

Providence as a dramatic motive.

Providence is a leading motive in fiction; indeed, every dramatist is not only a creator, but also the providence that moulds events in the sphere of his creation. This is partly recognised in the common phrase, Poetic Justice: but the term is not wide enough to cover the practice of artists in their moral government of the world of fiction. Poetic Justice has a great function to perform in making retribution artistic, or, where the term retribution will not apply, in tracing an artistic harmony between character and fate.

But great part of life, whether in reality or fiction, lies outside the sphere of justice; nay, it often impresses our sympathies, and thus becomes matter for art-treatment, by its very opposition to our conception of justice. What else is implied in the fundamental conception of tragedy? Tragedy, of course, includes retribution, but it becomes most distinctively tragic where retribution is not: where not only Lear pays the penalty of his errors, but the innocent Cordelia suffers with him, where honest Othello endures more agony than Iago is capable of, where rescue comes too late to save Antigone from her martyrdom. Were this not so there would be a gulf between nature and art: the negation of Poetic Justice has been one of the inspirations of poetry in every age.

> How oft is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out?
> That their calamity cometh upon them?
> That God distributeth sorrows in his anger?
> That they are as stubble before the wind,
> And as chaff that the storm carrieth away? . . . .
> One dieth in his full strength,
> Being wholly at ease and quiet:
> His breasts are full of milk,
> And the marrow of his bones is moistened.
> And another dieth in bitterness of soul,
> And never tasteth of good.
> They lie down alike in the dust,
> And the worm covereth them.

What the lyric poet describes and meditates upon, the dramatist pourtrays in action; and thus no term less wide than 'Providence' will convey his handling of moral government. Any principle which the course of the universe suggests to thinkers has a right to be reflected in fiction, with the emphasis of artistic setting. Now the dramatist will show combinations of evil overthrown in a moment by the irony of fate; now, exhibiting the best effort met by overpowering external antagonism, or overthrown by the smallest of flaws within itself, he will appeal to our sense of pathos. What-

CH. XIII. ever other impressions underlie the spectacle of human issues will be added; and, if these principles seem mutually contradictory, it is the business of philosophy to systematise, poetry may choose to stop short at pourtraying.

In The Tempest: Personal Providence.

When these general considerations are applied to *The Tempest* we shall find a peculiarity that separates this from all other plays of Shakespeare. The course of human events leaves upon thinkers two impressions, different but not inconsistent. All spectators behold the chaos of chance giving place to order, and see the emergence of moral laws. But some thinkers go further, and trace in what happens the guidance of a Personal Providence, never losing touch of the issues of life, though hiding himself till he appears in striking displays of his will. So Shakespeare's dramas as a whole make up a world in which moral law is for ever being displayed. But in this one play of *The Tempest* something more has been done. The whole course of circumstances is controlled by Prospero, who is for the purpose endowed with the power of enchantment. Now enchantment is, within its sphere, omnipotence: thus within the field of the play Prospero has been made the Providence which irresistibly controls the issues of events. Of course the mere sense of an overruling providence, such as Gonzalo expresses, may be paralleled from many other plays, as simply the opinion of an individual personage. But in *The Tempest* it is the dramatic machinery itself that unveils to us the governing power of its universe in the magically-endowed Prospero. If then we review the successive incidents of this play as they unfold themselves, we shall be seeing, under Shakespeare's guidance, the different aspects of Personal Providence.

v. i. 201–13.

Opening Scene a prologue.

The opening scene is of the nature of a prologue: in the incident of the storm and shipwreck, with its tossings to and fro of sharp rough dialogue, we are passing from the outer world into the magic region within which Prospero reigns

omnipotent. With the majestic blank verse of the second scene we find ourselves upon the island, and are met by an unexpected effect: a note of trouble opens Prospero's triumph, and he commences his glory of playing Providence by having to console the being he loves best in the world, who is heartstruck at the ravages of the storm. So he who would sway the moral government of the universe must be prepared to bear upon his soul the weight of all the troubles and sufferings of the innocent inherent to the very machinery of government, all the questionings and heart-searchings of the reverent while the designs of Providence are dark. As Prospero speaks his words of consolation another aspect of a Personal Providence is called up:

Sorrows of Providence. i. ii.

Providence under restraint. i. ii. 26.

> The direful spectacle of the wreck, which touch'd
> The very virtue of compassion in thee,
> I have with such provision in mine art
> So safely order'd, that there is no soul—
> No, not so much perdition as an hair
> Betid to any creature in the vessel.

A judgment is abroad that is to strike princes and revolutionise kingdoms, yet is under restraint that it touch not the simplest individual who crosses its path.

Movement suspended incidents outside the scenic unity. i. ii. 32–374.

The greater part of this long second scene is outside the scenic unity of the play. It will be noted that in this one play Shakespeare has followed the classic unities of time and place; not traversing the long period of time, and touching the variety of locality usual to a romantic drama, but confining the action to a single island and a single day,—an arrangement peculiarly harmonious with the central idea, as if marking off the charmed circle within which alone the enchanter's power prevails. But it usually is found in plays of the classic type that a few incidents of the story, prevented by their distance of time and place from being acted, are introduced into the play by means of narrative. So in the present case, when the keynote of the action has been struck by the brief dialogue between Prospero and Miranda, the

CH. XIII.

action stands still for more than three hundred lines, and the interval is used to give us back-glances into the past. First Prospero tells his daughter the story of his life; and it is worth noting how he lays his magic mantle aside, as if to mark the suspension of the enchantment, which is the unity of the play. This story of Prospero is no part of his playing Providence, but gives the genesis of the situation which makes him a Providence for the island. We see the price he has had to pay for his magic power: a life devoted to study, the surrender of the world and its prizes, tragic suffering for himself and his child on the open sea, twelve years of solitary toil in the island to master his art, amid privations and constant watchfulness, where a moment's inattention would leave him to be torn to pieces by the spirits he has raised. With all this strange accidents must concur, such as the preservation of the rotten boat; and there is the waiting of a whole lifetime for a single moment of opportunity:

Prospero's Story: genesis of his providential position. 33–186.

> By my prescience
> I find my zenith doth depend upon
> A most auspicious star, whose influence
> If now I court not, but omit, my fortunes
> Will ever after droop.

The action still remains stationary while the dialogues with Ariel and with Caliban continue to review the past. These illustrate the dramatic effect of 'preparation': just as the musician will let us hear at the beginning of his piece a hint of the theme which is to dominate the close, so dramatists prepare for their main effects by introducing them in a modified form at an earlier stage. Prospero in the sequel is to control the fate of his human friends and enemies: these early sections survey his providential sway over the world of spirits during his long years in the island. Mercy and judgment, the two chief works of providence, have been exercised on Ariel and on Caliban. Ariel so bright and loving, suffering cruel tortures such as made wolves howl,

Dramatic Preparation.

Ariel's Story: Mercy. 187–304.

and penetrated the breasts of ever-angry bears, all because his delicacy shrank from the earthy abominations of the hideous witch—to have delivered such a sufferer when Sycorax was dead, and there was none but Prospero to undo the charm, this is the very luxury of mercy. And the luxury of punishment is a phrase hardly out of place when used in connection with Caliban. A creature humanised from his brutality by the assiduous care of Prospero, and brought by him within his family circle, who has repaid such benefits with attempted foulness, which he still chuckles to think of, and for which the only repentance he shows is bitter disappointment at his unsuccess—in dealing with him there is a sense of satisfaction in the possession of irresistible torture:

Caliban's Story: Judgment. 321–374.

> Shrug'st thou, malice?
> If thou neglect'st or dost unwillingly
> What I command, I'll rack thee with old cramps,
> Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar
> That beasts shall tremble at thy din.
> *Cal.* No, pray thee.
> [*Aside*] I must obey: his art is of such power,
> It would control my dam's god, Setebos,
> And make a vassal of him.

The suspended action begins to move forward again as Ferdinand is drawn by Ariel's music into the scene. The episode of Ferdinand and Miranda has an independent interest of its own in its bearing upon the central idea. It must be remembered that providence, as a dramatic motive, must always be *artistic* shaping of events: it may be so by giving artistic setting to some moral interest, or it may consist in the exercise of purely artistic handling on the control of events. Now it is one of the instincts of the imagination to work out the welfare of the attractive, and poetic providence could not have a more congenial task than in moving the course of incidents so as to draw together two lovers so rich in gifts of youth and beauty as Ferdinand and Miranda. Yet here also a moral touch is added when we

Movement resumed: Episode of Ferdinand and Miranda. i. ii. 375.

CH. XIII. see how Prospero's unlimited power uses trouble in order to procure the happiness of the lovers and make it greater. The progress of the episode, as it mingles with the other scenes, is suggestive on the subject of Personal Providence at every stage. Prospero's aside,

I. ii. 450.

> This swift business
> I must uneasy make, lest too light winning
> Make the prize light,

may be taken as the unfolding, before the event, of a providential purpose such as in real life, after the event, is sometimes seen to explain some phase of dark experience. Suggestive again is the harshness under which Prospero is veiling his schemes of happiness, and which has the effect of displaying Miranda in the full beauty of her soul as she seeks to mediate between father and lover. And very suggestive is the stolen visit of Miranda to the log-house, with 'Prospero above'—to use the stage-phrase—watching the two lovers carry forward his plans, while they fancy they are escaping his notice, and Miranda feels compunction for disobedience. Then the whole trouble is seen by Ferdinand as no more than a trial of his love, which has strangely stood the test; and the episode at last merges itself in the main plot, and becomes the chief link in the universal restoration that crowns it.

III. i.

IV. i; V. 172.

Main Story: darker providential mysteries. II. i.

With the second act and the arrival of the courtiers the main story is in full progress. The elaborate scene which stands first in that act is devoted to one of the darker and more terrible mysteries of providential government. The idea of Personal Providence must not be limited to that which a Christian would understand by the term. The ancient fatalistic systems of thought would recognise an occasional personality in the governing power of the universe—a malice in circumstances that enticed a sinner on in his sin till his punishment should be ripe. Nor is the notion entirely without sanction in Biblical thought, as where a lying spirit is put in the mouths of the evil king's prophets.

A similar conception animates the incident now ensuing: Providence seems there to contrive for the irreclaimable evil-doers a malicious vengeance, that operates by encouragement to fresh crime. Antonio and Sebastian are villains for whom no sympathy can be evoked. Yet when they reach the sphere of Prospero's power they alone appear unaffected by his enchantment; and when, at a strain of music from Ariel, all the rest of the party drop off in deep and overpowering slumber, they are left unvisited by the quality of the climate, staring at one another as they stand alone among the sleeping courtiers with mutual consciousness of the treason in their hearts. Then Antonio, as the bolder of the two, begins bit by bit to read into hard definite speech the hideous suggestiveness of the situation from which his companion shrinks, and a providential concurrence of circumstances is made to stand out, pointing to a deed of murder —the rightful heir that morning drowned, the king and his faithful followers bound in leaden slumber, the next of kin in regions distant ten leagues beyond man's life. One by one Sebastian's scruples give way, and with a burst of enthusiasm he embraces the project. All is ready—no, one thing has been forgotten, and they 'talk apart,' as if shrinking from their victims while they complete the plot for their death. It is just at this last moment, when they are stopping to put a final touch of perfection to their scheme, that the turn in events comes. The death-like stillness is broken by the distant sighing of the wind; it seems to come nearer, playing with the white hairs of the sleeping Gonzalo and fanning his aged cheek; it sounds more human in its sighing, it takes to itself articulate words and becomes the voice of Ariel:

Intrigue of Antonio and Sebastian. ii. i. 191.

> While you here do snoring lie,
> Open-eyed conspiracy
> His time doth take.
> If of life you keep a care,
> Shake off slumber, and beware:
> Awake, awake!

CH. XIII. The sound has died away again into silence; the conspirators return on tiptoe intoxicated with the excitement of murder; they draw their swords together.

> *Antonio.* Then let us both be sudden.
> *Gonzalo.* Now, good angels
> Preserve the King!

In an instant Gonzalo has awoke and roused his fellows, and all stand facing the intending traitors. A mocking fate has led them on to fully stain their souls with purpose of crime, while the crowning deed and prize has been snatched from them.

Comic matter and Providence. ii. ii; iii. ii; iv. i. 165; v. i. 256.

The next scene opens the comic business, which continues to mingle with and relieve the other incidents. These relief incidents are bound into a whole, not only by their development of the enchantment of intoxication, but equally by their bearing on poetic justice. Even sin has a comic side, and the resources of dramatic providence are sufficient to visit it with comic nemesis; but for all the comedy the spectacle none the less brings out one deep principle of moral government—how much force for the punishment of evil is latent in the evil itself. In the present case Ariel, as the instrument of retribution, has no need to draw upon his stores of supernatural might: he makes his victims furnish the force for their punishment, he himself only giving a touch of impulse to their passions, or twisting their purposes in a different direction. After the first scene has displayed the transforming power of alcohol upon Caliban, the second scene opens with a situation in which already are visible elements of discord. Stephano, possessed of the bottle, is the man in power, and Caliban's eyes are 'set in his head' with hero-worship. Trinculo has no bottle, and Caliban has no worship for him; a spirit of depreciatory criticism is thus pitted against the hero-worship, and all that Ariel need do when he encounters the party is to draw the spirit of quarrel to a head. A few words he casts on the air from his shroud of in-

visibility are mistaken for words of Trinculo, and the comrades are plunged in civil war. They are united again by the project against Prospero, and inflamed with a martial spirit already referred to in the words of the play: CH. XIII.

> So full of valour that they smote the air
> For breathing in their faces; beat the ground
> For kissing of their feet.

This drunken valour Ariel harnesses to his purpose, and makes it pull them to their confusion:

> I beat my tabor;
> At which, like unback'd colts, they prick'd their ears,
> Advanced their eyelids, lifted up their noses
> As they smelt music: so I charm'd their ears
> That calf-like they my lowing followed through
> Tooth'd briers, sharp furzes, pricking goss and thorns,
> Which enter'd their frail shins; at last I left them
> I' the filthy-mantled pool beyond your cell,
> There dancing up to the chins.

Once more, their martial guise much bedraggled, they are led on by the indomitable will of Caliban to the very threshold of Prospero's cell. But even here the magician will not summon force to his protection; he simply appeals from one form of covetousness to another, and, bidding Ariel strew glistening baubles in their path, waits to see ambition diverted from its object by cupidity. Only when he has by such means sufficiently defended himself, and the conspirators are engrossed in the division of their spoil, does Prospero, as an extra effect, throw in the external vengeance of cramps and dry convulsions to complete his discipline on creatures whose souls can be reached only through their bodies. The whole suggests an idea equally artistic and moral—a sense of economy in the governing power of the universe: the ends of justice are secured with the least expenditure of supernatural force, a few touches of direction being sufficient to exhibit evil working out its own destruction. *Providential Economy.*

CH. XIII.

Climax: the main Nemesis. iii. iii.

The matter reviewed brings us to the last scene of the third act. This is the climax, the magician's nemesis upon his human persecutors. Judgment is one of the great works of Providence, and judgment translated into the language of art is nemesis: its force lies not in the weight of the blow struck, but in the artistic links that connect the retribution with the sin. Enchantment serves to make the present nemesis ideal: no external force[1] appears from first to last, yet all the resources of artistic retribution are lavished upon it. There is preparation of the victims for the great shock. The antithesis to a sense of a Personal Providence is the confidence in the uniformity of the order of nature; this confidence is sapped by the 'quality of the isle,' with its suggestions of mysteries all around, and still more on the threshold of the Nemesis Scene by the incident of the supernatural banquet, where moreover the 'gentle actions of salutation' of the spirit-attendants assist in giving a personal reference to what follows. The courtiers have just overcome their shrinking from the supernatural, and braced themselves to partake, when the sudden reversal takes place: the banquet changes into the horror of a harpy, and from the harpy's ruffled feathers looks forth the infant face of Ariel to speak the doom.

> You are three men of sin, whom Destiny,
> That hath to instrument this lower world
> And what is in't, the never-surfeited sea
> Hath caused to belch up you; and on this island
> Where man doth not inhabit, you 'mongst men,
> Being most unfit to live. I have made you mad;
> And even with such-like valour men hang and drown
> Their proper selves. [*They draw their swords.*
> You fools! I and my fellows
> Are ministers of Fate: the elements,
> Of whom your swords are temper'd, may as well
> Wound the loud winds, or with bemock'd-at stabs

[1] The word 'pinch'd' in v. i. 74 I understand in the light of 'inward pinches' (three lines lower) and the general context to be metaphorical.

Kill the still-closing waters, as diminish
One dowle that's in my plume: my fellow-ministers
Are like invulnerable. If you could hurt,
Your swords are now too massy for your strengths,
And will not be uplifted. But remember—
For that's my business to you—that you three
From Milan did supplant good Prospero;
Exposed unto the sea, which hath requit it,
Him and his innocent child: for which foul deed
The powers, delaying, not forgetting, have
Incensed the seas and shores, yea, all the creatures,
Against your peace. Thee of thy son, Alonso,
They have bereft; and do pronounce by me:
Lingering perdition, worse than any death
Can be at once, shall step by step attend
You and your ways; whose wraths to guard you from—
Which here, in this most desolate isle, else falls
Upon your head—is nothing but heart-sorrow
And a clear life ensuing.

It is only a speech; yet, set in its framework of enchantment what sting of retribution does it omit? The guilty ones feel their power of physical resistance mysteriously paralysed, and that in face of the strongest stimulus of external mockery; they are reminded of the loneliness of the island from which all help of man is far; what sense of safety there is in the steady course of nature has already been snatched from them. In its place a terrible Destiny has emerged, of which the whole world is the instrument: its voice speaks in the voice of Ariel, and fellow-ministers are waiting all around to become visible. Their whole past stands out before them as no more than the story of one foul deed and its avenging; the very sea, which they had made the innocent accomplice of their crime, has bided his time to requite them, and the shores, yea, every creature, are incensed against them. For their present, they hear hurled at them the word 'mad,' the very sound of which has power to work that which it signifies, and they are told of the self-slaughter to which madness prompts. Their future looms

CH. XIII. before them as lingering perdition stretching beyond death, and they know its first stroke has already been accomplished in the drowning of the king's son. All space and time seems to have resolved itself into a trap of fate for them; and there is but one small avenue of escape hinted at in 'heart-sorrow and a clear life ensuing.'

The nemesis has fallen: and what is its effect on those who suffer it? Here Shakespeare is faithful to that wide conception of dramatic providence, which makes it reproduce all the impressions that the world of reality leaves upon thinkers, not alone those that are pleasing, but also those which disturb. Shakespeare is not satisfied with the easy morality which converts all its villains before the fall of the curtain. In the play, as in actual fact, men are seen divided into two classes: those in whom evil is only accidental, to be purged out of them by the discipline of experience, and those in whom the evil seems to be a part of their nature, and all the working of events upon them serves only to drive it deeper in. Alonso is by his doom driven to ecstasies of remorse: why? because he has before had a heart that could feel compunction.

iii. iii. 95.

> O, it is monstrous, monstrous!
> Methought the billows spoke and told me of it;
> The winds did sing it to me, and the thunder,
> That deep and dreadful organ-pipe, pronounced
> The name of Prosper: it did bass my trespass.

But, on the other hand, the hard hearts of Antonio and Sebastian are carried forward in blind resistance:

iii. iii. 102.

> *Sebastian.* But one fiend at a time,
> I 'll fight their legions o'er.
> *Antonio.* I 'll be thy second.

Mystery of the dividing-line amongst mankind.

From first to last there is no note of softening in them. The play is reflecting a view of the course of the universe, which has troubled so many thinkers—the conception of a terrible dividing-line amongst mankind, on one side of which is purification making purer and purer, on the other side evil

becoming hardened and more hard; and there is nothing in Shakespeare's treatment to suggest that this double process stops short of the climax, 'He that is righteous let him be righteous still, and he that is filthy let him be filthy still.'

The higher Climax of Mercy. v. i. 1–33, and from 58.

This nemesis has presented itself as a climax; and yet there is in reserve a higher climax still, when judgment resolves itself into mercy. By a graceful stroke of art, the intercession of Ariel is made the occasion for accomplishing a purpose which has long before formed itself in Prospero's breast[1]. Like day stealing upon night, sound understanding is allowed to replace the distraction of the guilty sinners, and it is a triumph of enchantment to cancel the wrongs of a whole life in a moment of time. So the action has scope for gratifying that which is one of the most passionate instincts of the imagination—the longing for an ultimate universal restoration, however distant, from which none shall be excluded. If it be asked how this is reconcilable with what has just been said about the dividing-line, I can only answer that Shakespeare has been content to let these two aspects of providential government stand side by side in his play unreconciled, precisely as philosophic meditation on the course of the universe suggests the two thoughts without giving any clue as to their harmony. In *The Tempest* the universal restoration is unbroken by exception: not the impenitent Antonio and Sebastian are excluded, nor the brutalised Stephano and Trinculo; Alonso is restored to his kingdom, Ferdinand and Miranda, already restored to one another, are given to the bereaved father; Ariel is restored to liberty, and Caliban to his island: Gonzalo adds:

Universal restoration.

> All of us to ourselves
> When no man was his own.

Nay, the restoration extends to things inanimate, and the

[1] This seems clear from v. i. 29; the whole speech, v. i. 21–30, seems a justification of a plan previously formed, not a change of purpose.

CH. XIII. ship, which in the opening scene we beheld sunk in the stormy sea, reappears in the sequel in all her gallant trim, her master capering to behold her. There is more than restoration, and Gonzalo in his musing on the strange experience catches a glimpse of one of the deepest providential mysteries—evil itself proved to be the outer husk of a higher good:

Mystery of Evil producing Good.

> Was Milan thrust from Milan that his issue
> Should become KINGS of Naples?

The Climax extended to the Personal Providence himself:

The universal restoration makes a grand final chord, on which this drama of Providence may conclude. But must there not of necessity be in it one note of discord? A goal of happiness is found for all the rest, but what of the magician himself? Though dukedoms and kingdoms are in disposal, yet for one who wields the empire of enchantment can any prize be found without making the end an anti-climax for him? If we examine the way in which, as an actual fact, Shakespeare has treated this point, we shall find dimly suggested in it a moral idea worthy even a ruler of the universe.

iv. i. fin. and v. i. init.

There comes a point at which Prospero's project passes beyond the reach of failure:

> At this hour
> Lie at my mercy all mine enemies . . . . . .
> My charms crack not, my spirits obey, and time
> Goes upright with his carriage.

v. i. 33.

He pauses to take survey of the unbroken completeness of his power, that has every department of nature under its control, that marshals all the elements to his will, that is obeyed beyond the grave itself. And to what does such a survey lead him? He realises the extent of his dominion only to lay it down.

> This rough magic
> I here abjure . . . . . I'll break my staff,
> Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
> And deeper than did ever plummet sound
> I'll drown my book.

self-renunciation.

The human mind has conceived no higher moral notion than

self-renunciation; and where the power is nearest to omnipotence the renunciation comes nearest to divine. Such a climax is reserved for the Providence of the enchanted island, who, while he feels the fulness of his sway, empties himself, and descends to simple human station. So the last note in the play is the human note of parting. Ariel, however regretted, must be dismissed to the elements; Miranda must follow the course of nature in quitting her father and cleaving to her husband; and for Prospero himself there is in full view the greatest parting of all:

> Thence retire me to my Milan, where
> Every third thought shall be my grave.

Summary.

I have thus endeavoured to justify my choice of a central idea for *The Tempest*, showing how all the matter of the play falls into place in such a scheme; due regard being had to the general principle, that the central idea must not be expected to connect itself with every single detail directly, but that it will attract round it other kindred notions, each in its turn a centre for a group of details. *The Tempest* bears the closest examination as a dramatic study of Providence; the fact that we are kept in contact with Prospero's meditations on his schemes of control makes this Providence take a personal form, while the engine by which he works his will is Enchantment. The personages of the play find their *raison d'être* as agents or victims of Providential Enchantment; their characters interpret themselves and show development, they fall into contrasts and groupings according to their bearing on this fundamental purpose. The incidents, situations and effects of the play are those of Enchantment; its movement is the unfolding of a supernatural scheme of providential government. If we consider the poem from the side of plot we see the dramatist here (and in scarcely any other case) going to the Classical Drama for his mode of treatment, because its narrow unities are more in keeping with the confined circle of a magician's power; while the

CH. XIII. relation between the main and the underplots is precisely the same as that between the central idea itself and the kindred ideas required to give it reality by associating it with commonplace experience. One remark only is yet necessary to make the analysis of the play complete; and it is a remark of general application. In every romantic drama there must of necessity be a large number of *mechanical personages*, introduced not for their own sake but to assist the presentation of others: yet, in proportion to the space they cover in the field of view, Shakespeare will endow them with some dramatic interest. Their function is not unlike that of the Chorus in Ancient Tragedy, except that they are distributed amongst the scenes of the drama instead of being kept as a body of external commentators. Such personages are in *The Tempest* to be found in the crowd of courtiers led by Gonzalo, and the crowd of sailors led by the boatswain. Their part is mainly to illuminate and reflect the various situations that arise: outside the movement of the play themselves they furnish a *point d'appui* on which that movement rests. Thus the busy opening scene has spice given to it by the clashing between the wit of Gonzalo and the rough tongue of the boatswain. In the island it is the forced talk of Gonzalo that brings out the marvel of the deliverance from the sea, and the character of the enchanted island; then his passages of irritable wit with Antonio and Sebastian help to paint the character of the two by suggestion of the antipathy between them and honesty. Gonzalo takes the lead in helping us to realise the incident of the supernatural banquet, and the condition of the guilty after the blow has fallen; while, during the long-drawn finale, Gonzalo follows exactly the function of chorus-leader, and reads into meaning every stage of the universal restoration; when its last note is complete the boatswain and he resume their passage of arms. Yet these mechanical personages are not entirely outside the central idea; the sailors have their loss and recovery of the ship,

Mechanical Personages, especially Gonzalo,

II. i.

III. iii. 27, 104, &c.

V. i, from 120.

also touched by the Central Idea.

and Gonzalo has connection enough with the original crime to feel his heart stirred by the final issue. Moreover, his personal character is one well fitted to be a stationary point in a moving drama of Providence. He is pre-eminently a man of an even temperament; good, but easy; like an ancient chorus, little elevated or depressed by the storms of circumstance. He has not been heroic to resist evil, though finessing to reduce by his practical compassion the suffering it entailed. But the changes of fortune do little to shake him; he does not forget his humour amid shipwreck, he maintains laborious cheerfulness when depression is all around; treason scorns him as merely a 'spirit of persuasion,' yet will do murder rather than face his 'upbraidings.' He has elected to be a spectator of life, so much as may be, and not an actor; and he is valuable in the spectacle of Providence from the eye he has to its fine dramatic effects, while as to the action his place is that of one who stands at an equal distance from the prizes of life and from its crimes.

i. ii. 161.

i. i; ii. i.

ii. i. 235, 286

XIV.

How 'Love's Labour's Lost' presents Simple Humour in conflict with Various Affectations and Conventionalities.

A further Study in Central Ideas.

Ch. XIV.

The word 'humour.'

THE title of this chapter contains the word 'humour.' The word is as varied and interesting as the thing it describes. Starting from a material signification, 'moisture,' it became early appropriated by the various forms of moisture within the human body—the blood, the phlegm, the bile. In this connection it encountered the theory of mediaeval physiology, which made the particular tempers and dispositions of men dependant upon the preponderance of one or other of these juices of the body: if a man was 'phlegmatic' in disposition, it was because he had too much phlegm in him, bright (arterial) blood would make him 'sanguine,' and dark (venous) blood 'melancholy' (or black-juiced). It was then an easy transition for men's 'humours' to mean the bent of their individual characters, and a 'humourist' was a painter of character. But these individualities of character in men are a leading source of the ludicrous: as the north-country proverb puts it, 'there's nought so queer as folk.' Hence the word 'humour' widens, to include the whole range of the ludicrous. But again, such a wide range must invite fresh specialisation, and a specialisation has taken place which I know not how to describe, unless by calling humour the *human interest in the*

ludicrous, distinguished in the clearest manner from wit, with its cold intellectual brightness. In this final sense of humour the ludicrous can appear in happy combination with every passion of the human heart, the tragic and pathetic not excepted, and the humour of Dickens and Thackeray is often more nearly allied to tears than to laughter.

Shakespeare illustrates every phase and variety of humour: a complete analysis of Shakespeare's humour would make a system of psychology. I have here to deal with only a single one among its countless varieties, and one which is intelligible enough. Humour is a complete solvent to every form of affectation. It is a more subtle foe to unnaturalness than satire itself, because satire is on the face of it hostile: humour may be keenly alive to the ludicrous even in that with which it is in sympathy. Satire is the wind in the fable, and may be met by resistance: humour is the sunshine which succeeds by getting the traveller himself on its side. Humour is thus the great vindicator of the natural; it is an exquisite perception of the normal in human affairs; it is common sense etherealised; the readiness with which it is roused by every unreasonable excess constitutes it a sort of comic nemesis. The special interest which dominates the play *Love's Labour's Lost* is the bringing of humour into contact with its antipathetic, with some train of unnatural circumstances, or the various artificial conventionalities of its age: these are, by the mere contact, exposed and shattered.

Humour as the solvent of Affectation.

This the Central Idea of the play.

The unnaturalness to be exposed consists, first, in a forced and unnatural social regimen, to which the king and his friends have bound themselves by oath:

Main Affectation attacked: the Celibacy scheme.

> To live and study here three years,
> . . . not to see a woman in that term, . . .
> And one day in a week to touch no food
> And but one meal on every day beside, . . .
> And then to sleep but three hours in the night,
> And not be seen to wink of all the day.

i. i.

CH. XIV. This artificial life prescribed by authority produces time-serving and hypocritical imitation amongst lesser personages, and we have an underplot of Don Armado, who, having discovered a man violating the royal edict by being found in company with a woman within the precincts of the court, shows his zeal by sending the man to the king for punishment, while of the woman (who is a beauty) he undertakes the custody himself. There are further various conventionalities of the age, introduced for incidental effects. One is the euphuism of this Armado. He addresses the king in his letter:

Lesser Affectations exposed: Euphuism, i. i, ii.

> Great deputy, the welkin's vicegerent and sole dominator of Navarre, my soul's earth's god, and body's fostering patron.

The circumstances under which he discovered the guilty pair, were that—

> besieged with sable-coloured melancholy, I did commend the black-oppressing humour to the most wholesome physic of thy health-giving air.

When he has had time to make acquaintance with the pretty peasant girl who is his captive, he affects the very ground, which is base, where her shoe, which is baser, guided by her foot, which is basest, has trod. For a second conventionality, word-play and pedantry have their representative in Holofernes. In his extempore epitaph on the deer, he 'something affects the letter, for it argues facility':

Pedantry,

iv. ii. 58.

> The preyful princess pierced and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket;
> Some say a sore; but not a sore, till now made sore with shooting.
> The dogs did yell: put L to sore, then sorel jumps from thicket;
> Or pricket sore, or else sorel; the people fall a-hooting.
> If sore be sore, then L to sore makes fifty sores one sorel.
> Of one sore I an hundred make by adding but one more L.

iv. ii. &c.; v. i. 18. This effect is doubled by the addition of the curate, Sir Nathaniel, who follows Holofernes at an admiring distance, and takes out his tablets to note down his expression 'peregrinate,' as applied to Don Armado. This last is an illus-

tration of another affectation attacked, the striving after unusual and at that time new words. Armado employs Costard to carry a letter, and gives him something for 'remuneration':

CH. XIV.

Novelty in Words.

Costard. Now will I look to his remuneration. Remuneration! O, that's the Latin word for three farthings: three farthings—remuneration.—'What's the price of this inkle?'—'One penny.'—'No, I'll give you a remuneration': why, it carries it. . . . I will never buy and sell out of this word.

Biron comes up and accosts him, and sends him on a similar errand: 'There's thy guerdon: go.'

Costard. Gardon, O sweet gardon! better than remuneration, a 'levenpence farthing better: most sweet gardon! I will do it, sir, in print. Gardon! Remuneration! iii. i. 136–174.

It is quite in accordance with humour, as distinguished from satire, that it should to some extent sympathise with what it is laughing at; and no one can rise from a perusal of *Love's Labour's Lost* without feeling that the dramatist is himself, in moderation, a euphuist at heart. Biron is represented as the antagonist of excess in the king's circle; yet Biron when soliloquising, and therefore under no control from his fellows, is found to indulge in sustained hairsplitting. iv. iii. 1.

Humorous attack not inconsistent with sympathy.

The king he is hunting the deer; I am coursing myself: they have pitched a toil; I am toiling in a pitch,—pitch that defiles: defile! a foul word. Well, set thee down, sorrow! for so they say the fool said, and so say I, and I the fool: well proved, wit! By the Lord, this love is as mad as Ajax: it kills sheep; it kills me, I a sheep: well proved again o' my side!

Even when the play at its close turns serious, the euphuistic strain has still a place, and a formidable exhibition of this elaborate style is offered by Biron as 'plain words.' v. ii. 763.

Honest plain words best pierce the ear of grief;
And by these badges understand the king.
For your fair sakes we have neglected time,
Play'd foul play with our oaths: your beauty, ladies,

Hath much deform'd us, fashioning our humours
Even to the opposed end of our intents:
And what in us hath seem'd ridiculous,—
As love is full of unbefitting strains,
All wanton as a child, skipping and vain,
Form'd by the eye, and therefore, like the eye,
Full of strange shapes, of habits and of forms,
Varying in subjects as the eye doth roll
To every varied object in his glance:
Which parti-coated presence of loose love
Put on by us, if, in your heavenly eyes,
Have misbecomed our oaths and gravities,
Those heavenly eyes, that look into these faults,
Suggested us to make. Therefore, ladies,
Our love being yours, the error that love makes
Is likewise yours: we to ourselves prove false,
By being once false for ever to be true
To those that make us both,—fair ladies, you:
And even that falsehood, in itself a sin,
Thus purifies itself and turns to grace.

Word-play as a dramatic weapon.

It would seem that euphuism was recognised by the poet as a dramatic weapon with specific uses; and throughout the play, where a pause takes place in the action, the interest is maintained by verbal subtleties. Thus, the plot brings the Princess and her suite, under pretext of a shooting match, to a certain spot in order that a letter intended for another quarter may accidentally come into their hands: the brief interval before the messenger falls in with them is occupied less with the shooting than with a battle of puns. Again, in the scene which presents the first formal interview between the court of Navarre and their exalted visitors, as soon as the king has withdrawn, the relief to the strain of courtesy is admirably conveyed by an outburst of verbal subtleties. One more example fills up an interval in the fifth act.

iv. i.

ii. i, from 180.

v. ii. 15.

Katherine. And so she died: had she been light, like you,
Of such a merry, nimble, stirring spirit,
She might ha' been a grandam ere she died:
And so may you; for a light heart lives long.
Rosaline. What's your dark meaning, mouse, of this light word?

Katherine. A light condition in a beauty dark.
Rosaline. We need more light to find your meaning out.
Katherine. You'll mar the light by taking it in snuff;
Therefore I'll darkly end the argument.
Rosaline. Look, what you do, you do it still i' the dark.
Katherine. So do not you, for you are a light wench.
Rosaline. Indeed I weigh not you, and therefore light.
Katherine. You weigh me not? O, that 's you care not for me.
Rosaline. Great reason; for 'past cure is still past care.'
Princess. Well bandied both; a set of wit well play'd.

The last line is specially interesting; it clearly puts Shakespeare's conception of word-play as mental fencing, in which the mind finds a channel for redundant energy, and delights in exercise for exercise sake.

The representatives of humour in the play.

With such unnaturalness and such affectations the plot is contriving constantly to bring humour into contact. The main source of the humour is found in an accidental circumstance, which disconcerts the king's elaborate scheme: the arrival of a French princess with a train of ladies, on a lengthy embassy. The king does go so far as to keep these fair ambassadors outside the court; but to avoid visiting them is impossible, and thus the play settles down into a contest between the force of natural attraction and artificial resolution. The French ladies, and particularly their agent Boyet, stand for the triumphant humour; they are exhibited as giving full play to their natural feelings; they have a rich flow of spirits, and perhaps they are all the better representatives of humour from the fact that their wit is indifferent, needing youth and good spirits to carry it through. They exhibit, moreover, the special note of humour,—that it can be turned on themselves; and with all their mockings the princess makes no attempt to conceal from herself that she is in love.

I. i, from 133.

We are wise girls to mock our lovers so. V. ii. 58.

These representatives of humour, then, are kept by the plot in a position of advantage throughout, and by sheer force of

CH. XIV. fun they are able to disconcert the celibates at every turn; humour thus coming to be a sort of poetic justice, which visits the different characters in exact proportion to their artificiality and offence against the natural.

The Humorous and the Artificial in conflict.

There was a double unnaturalness in the scheme of the celibates, and the comic nemesis upon it is double. In the first place, it was an unnatural state of things as regarded their relations to one another, and they needed a mutual oath to support their resolution; accordingly, they attempt to conceal their lapses from one another, but are betrayed.

IV. iii. In a superbly comic scene the four come one after another to a sequestered spot in the park, seeking a secret place where they may indulge in a recitation of the love-sonnet which each has composed to his mistress, believing himself to be the only offender; and each in turn hides as he sees his comrade coming on the same errand, hoping to surprise his fellow in an act of perjury, while he conceals his own. The last to arrive is so surprised by the third, when suddenly the second leaps out of ambush to confront the third, and then the first in his turn comes down upon the second. Nor has he enjoyed his triumph over the three long, when the arrival of an intercepted letter reduces him to the level of his companions. Again, the celibate scheme of life was a violation of nature in reference to the ladies; and consequently there is a further nemesis of ridicule when the men break through their vow, after having urged it to their visitors by such overt means as keeping them outside the palace.

Compare II. i. from 91 and V. ii. from 395.

> *Princess.* None are so surely caught, when they are catch'd,
> As wit turn'd fool . . .
> *Rosaline.* The blood of youth burns not with such excess
> As gravity's revolt to wantonness.

The celibates can recover their position only by entering into the humour of the circumstances which have turned against them. In the scene of their betrayal to one another,

after a spirited attempt to brazen it out, they yield to the force of the situation, calling on Biron to give them reasons for the course they have resolved on, to cheat the devil after the sin has been committed; this he does in a mock pompous oration, after which they lay these glozings by, and set about wooing these girls of France. But they are not yet completely purged of their sin against humour, and resolve to cover their approach with an elaborate masque—another of the conventionalities of the age to be pilloried. This purpose unfortunately is overheard, and communicated to the ladies, who determine to disconcert it, solemnly turning their backs at the supreme moment of the compliment, and afterwards, in the more miscellaneous conversation, arranging to exchange masks, so that each courtier pours his adoration into the ear of the wrong mistress. The celibates fully recover their equality with their visitors only when they enter into the humour of their persecutors, and—hardest test of all—join in abuse of their spoiled pageants. Then the action reaches its climax in a prolonged cascade of humorous fireworks.

CH. XIV.

iv. iii. 221–282; 283–end.

v. ii. from 80.

v. ii, from 512.

Fate of personages determined by sense of humour.

In this nemesis of humour upon affectation, the different personages fare exactly according to the sense of humour they possess. Of the celibates Biron has most sense of humour, especially seen in his ready appreciation of the arch-persecutor Boyet, and accordingly he always has the advantage over his fellows: he alone objects to the scheme at the outset, he is the last to be exposed in the discovery scene, and the first to enter into the spirit of the finale. The king is a constant contrast. Of the lesser personages the dramatist keeps our sympathy with those that are the most natural, and have most sense of fun. Moth, the bright page of Armado, is always natural, always seen to advantage, and even proves not unequal to the exigencies of the reception scene, where he is the speaker of the conventional compliment:

v. ii. 315, 395, 472; i. i. 47; iv. iii. 200.

v. ii. 335, &c.

i. ii. &c.

CH. XIV.

v. ii. 158.

Moth. All hail, the richest beauties on the earth. . . .
A holy parcel of the fairest dames
[*The Ladies turn their backs to him.*
That ever turn'd their—backs—to mortal views!
Biron. [*Aside to Moth*]. Their eyes, villain, their eyes.

E. g. iii. i. 71–174; v. i. 158, &c.

Costard and Dull are natural by the side of Armado and Holofernes. Costard's humorous termination to his presentation of Pompey in the pageant—

If your ladyship would say, 'Thanks, Pompey,' I had done—

v. ii.

secures him an easy dismissal; whereas Holofernes' pedantry is drowned in a shower of puns and wit-thrusts, and Armado not only fares hard as Hector, but by an accidental word of his gives opportunity to the simple Costard to bring out the whole scandal of Jaquenetta his captive. So the triumph of comic justice has become complete, and in affectation thus melting away at the touch of humour the play has found its motive and inspiration.

The Central Idea underlies the Structure of the play.

So far I have discussed only in a general way the matter of which this drama is composed. If we now proceed to analyse it with due attention to the disposition and proportion of its parts, which are the basis of plot, we shall find that the structure of the play, no less than its general spirit, rests upon the conflict between humorous and artificial.

Main plot.

Love's Labour's Lost has a very regular plot, of the type 'Complication and Resolution.' Its Main Action may be stated as a series of humorous situations, produced by the incidence of the Complication—the Princess's visit, with all the forces of social attraction it brings—upon the unnatural mode of life set up at the beginning of the play. As already intimated, it falls into a double action, corresponding to the double unnaturalness of the celibates' scheme. Their plan of life implied an artificial bond amongst themselves, needing a mutual oath to support their resolution: when this artificial barrier against love has broken

down, they attempt each to deceive the rest, but are all betrayed to one another. Agreed among themselves to give way they still, as against their visitors, seek to cover their yielding by the disguise of their approach, but the betrayal of their purpose involves them in a second humorous exposure, where Biron leads the way in complete surrender to simplicity and nature. CH. XIV.

Biron. Can any face of brass hold longer out? v. ii. 395.
Here stand I: lady, dart thy skill at me;
Bruise me with scorn, confound me with a flout;
Thrust thy sharp wit quite through my ignorance;
Cut me to pieces with thy keen conceit;
And I will wish thee never more to dance,
Nor never more in Russian habit wait.
O, never will I trust to speeches penn'd,
Nor to the motion of a schoolboy's tongue,
Nor never come in vizard to my friend,
Nor woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song!
Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,
Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,
Figures pedantical; these summer flies
Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:
I do forswear them; and I here protest,
By this white glove,—how white the hand, God knows!—
Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd
In russet yeas and honest kersey noes:
And, to begin, wench,—so God help me, la!—
My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw.
Rosaline. Sans *sans*, I pray you.

Underplot.

We thus seem to see two successive waves of pretentious artificiality break in humour; and this makes the main action of the play. There is further an Underplot, analogous in spirit and in form to this main action. It rests upon two groups of inferior personages, embodying two conventionalities of the period placed in conflict with influences making for naturalness and humour. The centre of the first group is Don Armado, who never speaks but in the conventional language of euphuism, and whose life is as showy and

CH. XIV. deceitful as his talk. He is kept in continual contact with Moth and his genuine sparkle of youthful vivacity.

I. ii. 60.

Armado. I will hereupon confess I am in love: and as it is base for a soldier to love, so am I in love with a base wench. If drawing my sword against the humour of affection would deliver me from the reprobate thought of it, I would take Desire prisoner, and ransom him to any French courtier for a new-devised courtesy. I think scorn to sigh: methinks I should outswear Cupid. Comfort me, boy: what great men have been in love?

Moth. Hercules, master.

Armado. Most sweet Hercules! More authority, dear boy, name more; and, sweet my child, let them be men of good repute and carriage.

Moth. Samson, master: he was a man of good carriage, great carriage, for he carried the town-gates on his back like a porter; and he was in love.

Armado. O well-knit Samson! strong-jointed Samson! I do excel thee in my rapier as much as thou didst me in carrying gates. I am in love too. Who was Samson's love, my dear Moth?

Moth. A woman, master.

Armado. Of what complexion?

Moth. Of all the four, or the three, or the two, or one of the four.

Armado. Tell me precisely of what complexion.

Moth. Of the sea-water green, sir.

Armado. Is that one of the four complexions?

Moth. As I have read, sir; and the best of them too.

Armado. Green indeed is the colour of lovers; but to have a love of that colour, methinks Samson had small reason for it. He surely affected her for her wit.

Moth. It was so, sir; for she had a green wit.

Armado. My love is most immaculate white and red.

Moth. Most maculate thoughts, master, are masked under such colours.

Armado. Define, define, well-educated infant.

Moth. My father's wit and my mother's tongue, assist me!

Armado. Sweet invocation of a child; most pretty and pathetical!

Moth.
If she be made of white and red,
Her faults will ne'er be known,
For blushing cheeks by faults are bred,
And fears by pale white shown:
Then if she fear, or be to blame,
By this you shall not know,
For still her cheeks possess the same
Which native she doth owe.

Nor is Moth the only foil to Armado: even when he encounters the rough common sense of Costard, or the simple human nature of the pretty Jaquenetta, the pompous knight regularly, in the reader's eyes, gets the worse, though the wit of such contests is too thin to be adequately brought out by quotations unsupported by the actors' by-play. CH. XIV. i. ii. 138.

Armado. I do betray myself with blushing. Maid!
Jaquenetta. Man?
Armado. I will visit thee at the lodge.
Jaquenetta. That's hereby[1].
Armado. I know where it is situate.
Jaquenetta. Lord, how wise you are!
Armado. I will tell thee wonders.
Jaquenetta. With that face?
Armado. I love thee.
Jaquenetta. So I heard you say.
Armado. And so, farewell.
Jaquenetta. Fair weather after you!
Dull. Come, Jaquenetta, away! [*Exeunt Dull and Jaquenetta.*
Armado. Villain, thou shalt fast for thy offences ere thou be pardoned.
Costard. Well, sir, I hope, when I do it, I shall do it on a full stomach.
Armado. Thou shalt be heavily punished.
Costard. I am more bound to you than your fellows, for they are but lightly rewarded.
Armado. Take away this villain.

The second group gathers around the pedantry of Holofernes, which is set off by a double foil: an admiring rival in Sir Nathaniel the curate, and a foil of a different kind in goodman Dull, whose density is continually contrasting with the other's learning, and at the same time spoiling the intended effect.

Holofernes. The deer was, as you know, sanguis, in blood; ripe as the pomewater, who now hangeth like a jewel in the ear of caelo, the sky, the welkin, the heaven; and anon falleth like a crab on the face of terra, the soil, the land, the earth. iv. ii. 2.
Nathaniel. Truly, Master Holofernes, the epithets are sweetly varied,

[1] A phrase for 'That's as it may turn out.'

CH. XIV. like a scholar at the least: but, sir, I assure ye, it was a buck of the first head.

Holofernes. Sir Nathaniel, haud credo.

Dull. 'Twas not a haud credo; 'twas a pricket.

Holofernes. Most barbarous intimation! yet a kind of insinuation, as it were, in via, in way, of explication; facere, as it were, replication, or rather, ostentare, to show, as it were, his inclination, after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or rather, unlettered, or ratherest, unconfirmed fashion, to insert again my haud credo for a deer.

Dull. I said the deer was not a haud credo; 'twas a pricket.

Holofernes. Twice-sod simplicity, bis coctus!

O thou monster of Ignorance, how deformed dost thou look!

Nathaniel. Sir, he hath never fed of the dainties that are bred in a book;

he hath not eat paper, as it were; he hath not drunk ink: his intellect is not replenished; he is only an animal, only sensible in the duller parts:

And such barren plants are set before us that we thankful should be,
Which we of taste and feeling are, for those parts that do fructify in us more than he.
For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool,
So were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school:
But omne bene, say I; being of an old father's mind,
Many can brook the weather that love not the wind.

Dull. You two are book-men: can you tell me by your wit
What was a month old at Cain's birth, that 's not five weeks old as yet?

Holofernes. Dictynna, goodman Dull; Dictynna, goodman Dull.

Dull. What is Dictynna?

Nathaniel. A title to Phœbe, to Luna, to the moon.

Holofernes. The moon was a month old when Adam was no more,
And raught not to five weeks when he came to five-score.
The allusion holds in the exchange.

Dull. 'Tis true indeed; the collusion holds in the exchange.

Holofernes. God comfort thy capacity! I say, the allusion holds in the exchange.

Dull. And I say, the pollusion holds in the exchange; for the moon is never but a month old: and I say beside that, 'twas a pricket that the princess killed.

Out of these two character groups rise two Sub-Actions, which are drawn into the general movement of the play. The first is the intrigue of Armado with Jaquenetta. This

gives support to the earlier of the two phases in the main action: there is a blunder in the delivery of the love-letters, the effect of which extends to the King and his fellow-conspirators, and completes their mutual betrayal. By the same mistake Armado's intrigue is itself betrayed, and this sub-action in the end reaches a position of equilibrium when the pretentious impostor descends to naturalness, sees the day of wrong through the little hole of discretion, and vows to hold the plough three years for love of his base peasant girl. Again, the stationary interest of the pedantic display takes movement to support the later phase of the main action, Holofernes being charged with the pageant under cover of which, with all its Classic Worthies, the lovers are to approach their mistresses: but the turn in the main action overthrows the sub-action also, and the pageant-manager, in his hour of importance, finds employers, audience, and half his actors uniting to overwhelm the performance in chaff.

iv. iii. 189; i. 57.

v. ii. 732, 893.

v. i. 119; ii.

Enveloping Action.

One more remark has to be made before the statement of the plot is complete. The main body of the play—plot and underplot—is surrounded by a wider Enveloping Action, slightly sketched: the comic interchange of personal perplexities and reconciliations is framed in a sober interest of high politics—the illness and death of the French king, that just appears at the beginning and end. It is in accordance with Shakespeare's usual handling of plot thus to enclose action within action, like the sphere within sphere of the Ptolemaic astronomy, as Holofernes would no doubt have remarked. If I may continue in the spirit of Holofernes, I would point out that in this case the outer Enveloping Action is like the *primum mobile* of that astronomic system, and imparts motion to all the interior actions. For it is the embassy necessitated by the king's failing health which brings the French ladies into the play, and sets up the conflict of humour and convention. When this conflict has

CH. XIV. worked itself out to its natural resolution, the enveloping action appears a second time to effect a further resolution. In the height of the mirth over the discomfited pageant the sudden announcement is made of the King's death. In an instant the play becomes serious. But the lovers take advantage of the seriousness to press their suits in earnest. The ladies take advantage of the period of mourning to fix conditions. The King of Navarre is bidden to immure himself in some forlorn and naked hermitage, remote from the pleasures of the world, for twelve months: if his love stands this test he may challenge his princess, who will have been a solitary mourner all the time, and she vows to be his. Similar terms are made with Navarre's companions, and Biron in particular is to exercise his jesting humour in a hospital, to see

v. ii. 724.

> If sickly ears,
> Deaf'd with the clamours of their own dear groans,
> Will hear your idle scorns—

if not, to reform: but in either case Rosaline will have him. The plot has thus provided for a dramatic nemesis: the *self-inflicted* unnatural regimen of the celibates, at the beginning of the play, is balanced by the *forced* unnatural regimen imposed on them as a preliminary condition when they desire to marry: and this stipulation of celibacy seems to follow naturally from the King of France's death. The dramatist who feels equally all attractions, will not build up his light structure of humour and passing affectation without giving us a glimpse of some foundation for it in the sober political world.

Thus the whole play of *Love's Labour's Lost* appears permeated with these clashings between humorous and artificial; whether we look at the personages and their fate in the story, or survey the subject-matter, or watch the succession of comic effects, or technically analyse the structure of the drama, we find that every kind of interest refers back to the

same source. The conflict, then, of humour with affectation and conventionality is, in the fullest sense of the word, the Central Idea of this play. And the following chapter will show that the same idea largely colours another play which is too many-sided in its interest to be referred to any single motive.

XV.

How 'As You Like It' presents Varied Forms of Humour in conflict with a Single Conventionality.

A Study of more Complex Dramatic Colouring.

Love's Labour's Lost and As You Like It compared.

LOVE'S Labour's Lost is an early play. But in another drama, more complex in its general character, Shakespeare has again introduced the impact of humour upon affectation as a dominant motive. Between the two there is the difference we should expect. The earlier play we have seen resolve as a whole into the central idea, which gives significance to its every part; in *As You Like It* the conflict of humour with convention is only one motive amongst several. Moreover, the idea itself, which is common to the two plays, takes different form in each. In *Love's Labour's Lost* the humour is one and the same throughout, the artificialities with which it is in conflict are many. In *As You Like It*, on the other hand, there are three distinct types of humour: while, for the artificial element, we have that one great conventionality of poetry beside which all others may be called secondary.

Three types of humour in As You Like It.

Healthy Humour of Rosalind.

I distinguish the *healthy* humour of Rosalind, the *professional* humour of Touchstone, and the *morbid* humour of Jaques. The fun, that plays like sunlit ripples about Rosalind and her friends, Celia and Orlando, there is no need to discuss; every reader drinks it in eagerly, and no

Professional Humour of Touchstone.

one, I imagine, will object to the description of it as 'healthy.' I do not doubt that, as an individual, Touchstone is worthy to be added to this set: but the office he holds gives a different tone to his humour. In connection with another play it has been pointed out that the jester occupied, in the age of court officials, the same position which in this age of newspapers is held by *Punch:* both are national institutions for flashing a comic light on every passing topic. As a professional Fool, Touchstone has privileges: he may attack everything, and every sufferer must applaud his own castigation. But equally he has professional duties: he must use his folly as a stalking-horse under which to present wisdom, or, in other words, he must from time to time hint deep truths as well as keep up a continuous stream of vapid nonsense. The absence of spontaneity is the note which distinguishes this professional folly from natural wit such as Rosalind's. In the course of this play Touchstone has to draw fun on demand from such diverse topics as courtiers' oaths, travellers' complaints, the course of Time, the irregularities of Fortune, shepherd life, court life, music, versification, and his own intended wife—'a poor virgin, sir, an ill-favoured thing, sir, but mine own.' And, to fill up a moment of waiting, he is called upon to exercise his professional function at length, and extemporises a whole system of scientific quarrelling, through its degrees of Retort Courteous, Quip Modest, Reply Churlish, Reproof Valiant, Countercheck Quarrelsome, Lie with Circumstance, up to the unpardonable Lie Direct.

II. vii. 50.

V. iv. 111.

V. iv, from 70.

Morbid Humour of Jaques.

Of Jaques humour is a prominent feature, no less than of Touchstone and Rosalind: but to determine this third type of humour is much more difficult. The whole character of Jaques is one not easy to define, and one which leaves the most strangely opposite impressions upon different readers. He is a general favourite with audiences in the theatre. Actors, so far as I have observed, seem to form an exalted opinion

CH. XV. of him; and it must be difficult for them to do otherwise when they have to speak in his character the most famous of quotations that compares all the world to a stage. On the other hand, Jaques is certainly not a favourite with the personages in the story: he is least liked by the best of them, and the poet himself takes pains to except him from the happy ending which crowns the careers of the rest. The epithet 'philosophical' has stuck to Jaques, and there is good reason for it. We find him everywhere showing, not only seriousness of bent, but also that deep eye to the lessons of life underlying the outward appearances of things which is traditionally associated with wisdom. Yet in the scenes of the play his seriousness is not treated with much respect, and his wisdom by no means gives him the victory when he has to encounter much more unpretentious personages. Interpretation must find some view of him which will be consistent with all this; and we get a hint as to the direction in which we are to look for such a view in the play itself, where the Duke, in answer to Jaques' longing for the Fool's licence of universal satire, says that by such satire he would do—

ii. vii. 64.

> Most mischievous foul sin, in chiding sin:
> For thou thyself hast been a libertine,
> As sensual as the brutish sting itself;
> And all the embossed sores and headed evils,
> That thou with license of free foot hast caught,
> Wouldst thou disgorge into the general world.

The hypothesis which will make the whole character clear, so far as it can be summed up in a single phrase, might be expressed as the *morbid humour of melancholy*.

Humour is the flower of healthy mental growth; it is mental exertion not for a practical purpose but for its own sake; arbitrary and delighting in its own arbitrariness; it is turned on everything good or bad, great or trivial (for to humour all things are humorous), drawing from everything its sparkling surprises and for ever catching unexpected novelties

of aspect; it is an insight into the singularities that lie just below the surface of things, estimated more by their number and the quickness with which they present themselves than by weight and lasting worth; it is further in its sharpest strokes the outcome of the genial good-will which is the normal condition of a well-balanced mind. There is, however, a special Elizabethan view of humour, which emphasised one single element of it,—it was an *arbitrary* assumption of some mental attitude: 'tis my humour' is excuse sufficient for any perverse and unnatural mental condition that Ben Jonson's personages choose to indulge in. Amongst humours in this second sense one of the commonest is 'melancholy'; it was, we find, a specially English affectation, and so much a thing of fashion that in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* Stephen practises it before his looking-glass, and in asides asks his mentors whether he is melancholy enough. Yet this fashion rests on a weakness of human nature that is universal. At all times discontent has been affected as a sign of superiority; a chronic turned-up nose is to the superficial a suggestion of select taste. Every one is familiar with one form of such discontent,—the depreciation of home which travelling almost always produces in a shallow mind, and which is in the play itself alluded to as a characteristic of Jaques.

Farewell, Monsieur Traveller; look you lisp and wear strange suits, disable all the benefits of your own country, be out of love with your nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are, or I will scarce think you have swam in a gondola. iv. i. 33.

Jaques has adopted this Elizabethan humour of melancholy. But more than this, his humour is totally opposed to all that is healthy, and has become morbid; natural emotions have been worn out by his course of dissipation, and discontent supplies their place; with the corruption of his soul his humour, so to speak, has gone bad, and while he retains all the analytic power and insight into unexpected singularities,

CH. XV. yet his humour is no longer spontaneous but laboured, no longer genial, but flavoured with malevolence and self-exaltation.

Its morbid character traced in detail.

Examined in detail, Jaques' character exhibits the paradox and perversity of view which belongs to humour, but these are gloomy instead of bright, and suggest laborious search, and not involuntary mind-play. He is 'compact of jars'; he can suck melancholy out of a song as a weasel sucks eggs; he speaks of sleeping and railing as of the two sides of his normal condition. We have the Duke throughout by his side as a healthy contrast. The Duke did not seek the artificial life of the forest, though when driven to it by the stubbornness of fortune he can translate it to a quiet and sweet style: Jaques is repelled by his comrades' life as soon as it turns fortunate, and voluntarily flies from dancing measures to get pleasure out of a dethroned convertite. So with regard to the dying stag: the Duke's pity is accidental, rising naturally out of surrounding circumstances—that the brute as a native burgher of the forest should be slaughtered in his own confines. Jaques pours out his pathos as an indulgence; to borrow a word from the vocabulary of funeral sermons, he 'improves' the stag's dying agonies (having first found a comfortable position from which he can watch them) with a thousand ingenious similes, and is so left by his companions weeping and commenting. Similar is Jaques' connection with the celebrated simile of the stage: the brilliant working out of this idea must not blind us to the morbid tone of mind of which it is the outcome. The Duke's reflection which gives rise to the speech is cheerful, inviting to resignation because others have to endure. His accidental use of dramatic imagery is seized upon by Jaques as an opportunity for harping on the hollowness of everything human; it is that *all the world* is no more than a stage, and the men and women *merely* players, which makes the attraction of the theme to Jaques' mind, and his ingenuity catches the lowest

v. iv, from 186.

II. i.

II. vii. 136.

view of every phase of life—the mewling and puking infant, CH. XV.
the sighing and woeful young man, he characterises a soldier
as quick in quarrel, reputation as a bubble, he distinguishes
the justice by his creature comforts, old age by its leanness
and childish treble, until he reaches a congenial climax in
'sans everything.'

Yet that melancholy is not the real object of this apostle of melancholy some minor touches show. Amiens sings a song in praise of melancholy, Jaques at once turns it into ridicule, II. v. for to morbid humour its own pet affectation becomes objectionable when put forward by another. In fact he must have his melancholy to himself, as he is betrayed by Rosalind into avowing—

> I have neither the scholar's melancholy, which is emulation; nor the musician's, which is fantastical; nor the courtier's, which is proud; nor the soldier's, which is ambitious; nor the lawyer's, which is politic; nor the lady's, which is nice; nor the lover's, which is all these: but it is a melancholy of mine own, compounded of many simples, extracted from many objects, and indeed the sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me in a most humorous sadness. IV. i. 10.

It is thus egotism that is at the root of his morbid humour, which is no outcome of social life, but a constant attempt at self-exaltation by the mode of differing from others. He II. v. snubs modest excuses for a ragged voice, and compares compliments to the encounter of two dog-apes. He mocks again at 'burdens' and 'stanzos,' and similar technical terms: for your egotist both despises what everybody does as common-place, and equally regards any distinctive peculiarity he does not share as silly pedantry. Similarly with Jaques' objection to the Duke as too 'disputable': the natural course for one who has information being to impart it, the morbid mind affects reserve; he 'thinks of as many things as others, but gives Heav'n thanks, and makes no boast'—making thus his powers one more difference between himself and his fellow-men. It must not however be supposed that there is no exception to this universal depreciation. Morbid egotism

CH. XV. shows its exaltation above ordinary pleasures by a selection of its own, and by vehemence of admiration in proportion as admiration is unexpected. Not only is Jaques merry on hearing a melancholy song, but—like an æsthete with a sunflower—he is raised to a delirious ecstasy by meeting a professional Fool.

ii. vii. 12.

> A fool, a fool! I met a fool i' the forest,
> A motley fool; a miserable world!
> As I do live by food, I met a fool.

As the Fool follows his profession of railing Jaques' lungs begin to crow like chanticleer, and he laughs sans intermission an hour by the dial.

It is abundantly clear that malevolence is the inspiration of Jaques' humour. His moralisings on the dying stag are, as ii. i. 44. the courtiers point out, 'invectively' conceived: he hits the landowners in his reflection on the stag weeping tears into the brook, giving his sum of more to that which has too much; the court come in for their share in the proverb of misery parting the flux of company, and the city when the herd is upbraided for forsaking the broken bankrupt. He envies the ii. vii, from 42. Fool's motley for the sake of the Fool's unfettered liberty of attack; and when the Duke points out how ill Jaques is qualified for the Jester's office of good-natured censor, his answer shows that Jaques believes the world to be as bad as he wishes to paint it. If Rosalind's humour is a tribute to the delightful oddities of things in general, and Touchstone's humour is a tribute to his professional office, Jaques' morbid humour is a tribute only to himself.

Pastoral Life the great conventionality in the play.

Into these three contrasted types has the simple humour of *Love's Labour's Lost* been expanded. On the other hand, for the elaborate and varied artificialities of that play we have substituted one single conventionality which has maintained its ground in the world of imagination from Theocritus to Watteau—Pastoral Life. The traditional life of the old eclogues is lived again in the forest of Arden by the banished

Duke and his followers: with no worse ill than Adam's penalty, the seasons' difference; with hunting of the stag for enterprise, and presentation of him who killed the deer for triumph; with feasts *al fresco*, and songs under the greenwood tree. The simplicity of bucolic life is sufficiently represented in William and Audrey; and, if pastoral lovers are wanted, Phœbe for the fair unkind, Silvius as the despairing lover, with Corin as the Old Shepherd to soothe him, are types that the Sicilian Muses could not surpass. To the end of time, I suppose, shepherd life will be the traditional form in which the more elementary moods of the quiet passions will be enshrined, and Shakespeare is paying his footing as a universal poet when he makes the middle acts of *As You Like It* a dramatised idyl.

The three humours in conflict with the pastoral convention-ality.

Upon this accepted and most unmitigated conventionality the three founts of humour in the drama are continually playing. To draw out in detail the resulting effects would be to turn into dull prose half the play. Rosalind is pitted mainly against the pastoral lovers, and for the soft and sleepy tenderness of such love there can be no more wholesome tonic than the bright audacity and overwhelming flood of high spirits that belong to our heroine.

> What though you have no beauty,— iii. v. 37.
> As, by my faith, I see no more in you
> Than without candle may go dark to bed—
> Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
> . . . . . Od's my little life,
> I think she means to tangle my eyes too! . . .
> I pray you, do not fall in love with me,
> For I am falser than vows made in wine:
> Besides, I like you not.

Moreover, Rosalind in disguise is a humorous situation embodied; and this applied to the hopeless suit of Silvius draws out for the spectators a lengthened irony which finds a happy climax in reconciled impossibilities.

CH. XV. Touchstone also has his fling at the pastoral lovers. When the unhappy Silvius paints the true idyllic passion—

ii. iv. 34.

> If thou remember'st not the slightest folly
> That ever love did make thee run into,
> Thou hast not loved—

the professional Fool seconds him with instances:

> I remember, when I was in love I broke my sword upon a stone and bid him take that for coming a-night to Jane Smile; and I remember the kissing of her batlet and the cow's dugs that her pretty chopt hands had milked . . . We that are true lovers run into strange capers; but as all is mortal in nature, so is all nature in love mortal in folly.
>
> *Rosalind.* Thou speakest wiser than thou art ware of.
>
> *Touchstone.* Nay, I shall ne'er be ware of mine own wit till I break my shins against it.

But Touchstone's license roams more widely over all the denizens of the woodland. He woos the rustic Audrey with folly, with folly he frightens away his rival William; he plays a match with Corin of court folly against pastoral wit, and when this model Shepherd, getting the worse, falls back upon his dignity—

iii. iii; v. i. iii. ii.

> Sir, I am a true labourer: I earn that I eat, get that I wear, owe no man hate, envy no man's happiness, glad of other men's good, content with my harm, and the greatest of my pride is to see my ewes graze and my lambs suck—

Touchstone swoops upon this idyllic picture with a demonstration in theology that Corin's occupation is a simple sin involving him in a parlous state:

> If thou beest not damned for this, the devil himself will have no shepherds.

Finally the Fool gets an opportunity for one of his set discourses on this theme of the pastoral life:

> Truly, shepherd, in respect of itself, it is a good life; but in respect that it is a shepherd's life, it is naught. In respect that it is solitary, I like it very well; but in respect that it is private, it is a very vile life. Now, in respect it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in

respect it is not in the court, it is tedious. As it is a spare life, look you, it fits my humour well; but as there is no more plenty in it, it goes much against my stomach. CH. XV.

If the conventionalities of pastoral poetry are to be taken literally, I do not know that the merits of that phase of existence could be more profoundly summed up.

As to the third type of humour, I have in describing it indicated sufficiently how the morbid melancholy of Jaques is turned upon every element of the life around him. But when, by expansion of the treatment in the earlier play, three distinct humours have been brought to bear upon the conventional, a further effect is still possible—the three humours can be brought into conflict with one another. *The three humours in conflict with one another.*

Touchstone is the comrade and firm friend of Rosalind and her set, and if he chaffs them, it belongs to his office, and they readily join in the game. But when the folly is sprung upon them by surprise it is possible for them to be disconcerted. Celia believes herself alone as she comes reading the lover's verses, which endow her friend with the 'quintessence of every sprite'— iii. ii. 133.

> Helen's cheek, but not her heart,
> Cleopatra's majesty,
> Atalanta's better part,
> Sad Lucretia's modesty.

Touchstone[1] startles her dreaming away—

> O most gentle pulpiter! what tedious homily of love have you wearied your parishioners withal, and never cried, 'Have patience, good people!'
>
> *Celia.* How now! back, friends! Shepherd, go off a little. Go with him, sirrah.

[1] The editions give this speech to Rosalind (iii. ii. 163). But this is surely impossible. Not only is Celia's reproof addressed to Touchstone, and he in retiring treats it as such, but when he is gone Celia asks Rosalind, 'Didst thou hear these verses?'—which would be absurd if Rosalind had spoken the words of satire on them.

CH. XV. Celia is clearly 'out' in this game of wit, for she has answered pettishly; Touchstone feels he has scored:

> Come, shepherd, let us make an honourable retreat; though not with bag and baggage, yet with scrip and scrippage.

iii. ii, from 93. A precisely similar encounter takes place with Rosalind: but though surprised she rallies to the game, and puts the Fool himself out. She is indulging in the pastoral to her own praise—

> From the east to western Ind
> No jewel is like Rosalind.
> Her worth, being mounted on the wind,
> Through all the world bears Rosalind.
> All the pictures fairest lined
> Are but black to Rosalind.

The Fool breaks in, offering to rhyme her so for eight years together, dinners and suppers and sleeping-hours excepted: for such false gallop of verses is no more than the right butter-woman's rank to market.

> If a hart do lack a hind,
> Let him seek out Rosalind.
> If the cat will after kind,
> So be sure will Rosalind.
> Winter garments must be lined,
> So must slender Rosalind, &c.

Our heroine is disconcerted, but alert enough to exchange thrust and cut.

Rosalind. Peace, you dull fool! I found them on a tree.

Touchstone. Truly, the tree yields bad fruit.

Rosalind. I'll graff it with you, and then I shall graff it with a medlar: then it will be the earliest fruit i' the country; for you'll be rotten ere you be half ripe, and that 's the right virtue of the medlar.

For once the professional Jester is unable to come up to time, and he has no repartee ready.

Touchstone. You have said; but whether wisely or no, let the forest judge.

Similarly, although Jaques patronises Touchstone, takes the Fool for his model and his ambition, snubs other discourse in order to draw out his folly, and calls upon others to enjoy it, yet a conflict between the morbid and the professional humours is possible, when Touchstone descends so far from the dignity of his office as to contemplate the step of marrying. Jaques will assist his protégé's insane act by giving Audrey away, but must at all events sneer at the parson. iii. iii, from 72.

Will you, being a man of your breeding, be married under a bush like a beggar? .... this fellow will but join you together as they join wainscot; then one of you will prove a shrunk panel, and, like green timber, warp, warp.

Touchstone is equal to a reply in his most professional style.

I am not in the mind but I were better to be married of him than of another: for he is not like to marry me well; and not being well married, it will be a good excuse for me hereafter to leave my wife.

Professional humour then has clashed with genuine, morbid with professional. The treatment is complete when the unhealthiness of humour in Jaques is accentuated by his being brought into contact with humour that is sound. When the man of melancholy crosses swords with the lover Orlando he does not come off victorious. iii. ii, from 268.

Jaques. God be wi' you: let 's meet as little as we can.

Orlando. I do desire we may be better strangers.

Jaques. I pray you, mar no more trees with writing love-songs in their barks.

Orlando. I pray you, mar no more of my verses with reading them ill-favouredly.

Jaques. Rosalind is your love's name?

Orlando. Yes, just.

Jaques. I do not like her name.

Orlando. There was no thought of pleasing you when she was christened.

Jaques. What stature is she of?

CH. XV.

Orlando. Just as high as my heart.

Jaques. You are full of pretty answers. Have you not been acquainted with goldsmiths' wives, and conned them out of rings?

Orlando. Not so; but I answer you right painted cloth, from whence you have studied your questions.

Jaques admires the nimble wit, and proposes to sit down and rail in duet against 'our mistress the world, and all our misery.' Orlando takes up the position—unintelligible to a being like Jaques—of caring to rail at none but himself, against whom he knows most faults. Jaques retires in disgust.

Jaques. By my troth, I was seeking for a fool when I found you.

Orlando. He is drowned in the brook: look but in, and you shall see him.

Jaques. There I shall see mine own figure.

Orlando. Which I take to be either a fool or a cipher.

Jaques. I'll tarry no longer with you: farewell, good Signior Love.

Orlando. I am glad of your departure: adieu, good Monsieur Melancholy.

But the supreme touch of delineation for morbid humour is given by the mere contact of Jaques with the essence of health and brightness in the disguised Rosalind. Like evil spirits compelled by the touch of Ithuriel's spear to show themselves in their true shapes, Jaques seems drawn on by Rosalind's presence to call attention to his peculiar qualities with almost infantile complacency:—how he loves melancholy more than laughing, and thinks it good to be sad and say nothing (like a post, Rosalind interjects), and how, in detail, his melancholy has been compounded out of the scholar, the musician, the courtier, and all others he has met on his travels. So far Rosalind seems to have been looking at him quietly, as a curiosity: in the last sentence she finds the clue to understanding him.

Esp. iv. i. init.

Rosalind. A traveller! By my faith, you have great reason to be sad: I fear you have sold your own lands to see other men's; then, to have seen much and to have nothing, is to have rich eyes and poor hands.

Jaques. Yes, I have gained my experience.

Rosalind. And your experience makes you sad: I had rather have a fool to make me merry than experience to make me sad; and to travel for it too!

Jaques appears suddenly to wake up to the sort of impression he is making on the attractive youth, and he seizes the first opportunity for retreating in disgust, with the woman's last word following him down the glade.

PART SECOND.

SURVEY OF

DRAMATIC CRITICISM

AS AN INDUCTIVE SCIENCE.

XVI.

Topics of Dramatic Criticism.

Purpose: to survey Dramatic Criticism as an inductive science.

In the Introduction to this book I pleaded that a regular inductive science of literary criticism was a possibility. In the preceding fifteen chapters I have endeavoured to exhibit such a regular method at work on the dramatic analysis of leading points in Shakespeare's plays. The design of the whole work will not be complete without an attempt to present our results in complete form, in fact to map out a Science of Dramatic Art. I hope this may not seem too pretentious an undertaking in the case of a science yet in its infancy; while it may be useful at all events to the young student to have suggested to him a methodical treatment with which he may exercise himself on the literature he studies. Moreover the reproach against literary criticism is, not that there has not been plenty of inductive work done in this department, but that the assertion of its inductive character has been lacking; and I believe a critic does good service by throwing his results into a formal shape, however imperfectly he may be able to accomplish his task. It will be understood that the survey of Dramatic Science is here attempted only in the merest outline: it is a glimpse, not a view, of a new science that is proposed. Not even a survey would be possible within the limits of a few short chapters except by confining the matter introduced to that previously laid before the reader in a different form. The leading features of Dramatic Art have already been explained in the application of them to particular plays: they are now included in a single view,

CH. XVI. so arranged that their mutual connection may be seen to be building up this singleness of view. Such a survey, like a microscopic lens of low power, must sacrifice detail to secure a wider field. Its compensating gain will consist in what it can contribute to the orderly product of methodised enquiry which is the essence of science, and the interest in which becomes associated with the interest of curiosity when the method has been applied in a region not usually acknowledging its reign.

Definition of Dramatic Criticism:

The starting-point in the exposition of any science is naturally its definition. But this first step is sufficient to divide inductive criticism from the treatment of literature mostly in vogue. I have already protested against the criticism which starts with the assumption of some 'object' or 'fundamental purpose' in the Drama from which to deduce binding canons. Such an all-embracing definition, if it is possible at all, will come as the final, not the first, step of investigation. Inductive criticism, on the contrary, will seek its point of departure from outside. On the one hand it will consider the relation of the matter which it proposes to treat to other matter which is the subject of scientific enquiry; on the other hand it will fix the nature of the treatment it proposes to apply by a reference to scientific method in general. That is to say, its definition will be based upon differentiation of matter and development in method.

as to its field and its method.

Stages of development in the inductive method.

To begin with the latter. There are three well-marked stages in the development of sciences. The first consists in the mere observation of the subject-matter. The second is distinguished by arrangement of observations, by analysis and classification. The third stage reaches systematisation—the wider arrangement which satisfies our sense of explanation, or curiosity as to causes which is the instinct specially developed by scientific enquiry. Astronomy remained for long ages in the first stage, while it was occupied with the observation of the heavenly bodies and the naming of the

constellations. It would pass into the second stage with division of labour and the study of solar, lunar, planetary, and cometary phenomena separately. But by such discoveries as that of the laws of motion, or of gravitation, the great mass of astronomical knowledge was bound together in a system which at the same time satisfied the sense of causation, and astronomy was fully developed as an inductive science. Or to take a more modern instance: comparative philology has attained completeness in our own day. Philology was in its first stage at the Renaissance, when 'learning' meant the mere accumulation of detailed knowledge connected with the Classical languages; Grimm's Law may illustrate the second stage, a classification comprehensive but purely empiric; the principle of phonetic decay with its allied recuperative processes has struck a unity through the laws of philology which stamps it as a full-grown science. Applying this to our present subject, I do not pretend that Literary Criticism has reached the third of these three stages: but materials are ready for giving it a secure place in the second stage. In time, no doubt, literary science must be able to explain the *modus operandi* of literary production, and show how different classes of writing come to produce their different effects. But at present such explanation belongs mostly to the region of speculation; and before the science of criticism is ripe for this final stage much work has to be done in the way of methodising observation as to literary matter and form.

Dramatic Criticism in the intermediate

Dramatic Criticism, then, is still in the stage of provisional arrangement. Its exact position is expressed by the technical term 'topical.' Where accumulation of observations is great enough to necessitate methodical arrangement, yet progress is insufficient to suggest final bases of arrangement which will crystallise the whole into a system, science takes refuge in 'topics.' These have been aptly described as intellectual pigeon-holes—convenient headings under which materials may be digested, with strict adherence to method, yet only as

or 'topical' stage.

CH. XVI.

a provisional arrangement until further progress shall bring more stable organisation. This topical treatment may seem an unambitious stage in scientific advance, the goal and reward of which is insight into wide laws and far-reaching systematisations. Still it is a stage directly in the line of sound method: and the judicious choice of main and subordinate topics is systematisation in embryo. The present enquiry looks no further than this stage in its analysis of Dramatic Art. It endeavours to find convenient headings under which to set forth its observations of Shakespeare's plays. It also seeks an arrangement of these topics that will at once cover the field of the subject, and also carry on the face of it such an economy of mutual connection as may make the topics, what they ought to be, a natural bridge between the general idea which the mind forms of Drama and the realisation of this idea in the details of actual dramatic works.

Continuous differentiation of scientific subject-matter.

But the definition of our subject involves further that we should measure out the exact field within which this method is to be applied. Science, like every other product of the human mind, marks its progress by continuous differentiation: the perpetual subdivision of the field of enquiry, the rise of separate and ever minuter departments as time goes on. Originally all knowledge was one and undivided. The name of Socrates is connected with a great revolution which separated moral science from physics, the study of man from the study of nature. With Aristotle and inductive method the process became rapid: and under his guidance ethics, as the science of conduct, became distinct from mental science; and still further, political science, treating man in his relations with the state, was distinguished from the more general science of conduct. When thought awoke at the Renaissance after the sleep of the Dark Ages, political science threw off as a distinct branch political economy; and by our own day particular branches of economy, finance, for example, have practically become independent sciences. This charac-

teristic of science in general, the perpetual tendency to separate more confined from more general lines of investigation, will apply in an especial degree to literature, which covers so wide an area of the mind and is the meeting-ground of so many separate interests. Thus Shakespeare is a poet, and his works afford a field for considering poetry in general, both as a mode of thought and a mode of expression. Again, no writer could go so deeply into human nature as Shakespeare has done without betraying his philosophy and moral system. Once more, Shakespeare must afford a specimen of literary tendencies in general, and that particular modification of them we call Elizabethan; besides that the language which is the vehicle of this literature has an interest of its own over and above that of the thought which it conveys. All this and more belongs properly to 'Shakespeare-Criticism': but from Literary Criticism as a whole a branch is being gradually differentiated, Dramatic Criticism, and its province is to deal with the question, how much of the total effect of Shakespeare's works arises from the fact of his ideas being conveyed to us in the form of dramas, and not of lyric or epic poems, of essays or moral and philosophical treatises. It is with this branch alone that the present enquiry is concerned.

CH. XVI.

Dramatic Criticism branches off on the one side from the wider Literary Criticism:

But more than this goes to the definition of Dramatic Criticism. Drama is not, like Epic, merely a branch of literature: it is a compound art. The literary works which in ordinary speech we call dramas, are in strictness only potential dramas waiting for their realisation on the stage. And this stage-representation is not a mere accessory of literature, but is an independent art, having a field where literature has no place, in dumb show, in pantomime, in mimicry, and in the lost art of Greek 'dancing.'

on the other side from the allied art of Stage-Representation.

The question arises then, what is to be the relation of Dramatic Criticism to the companion art of Stage-Representation? Aristotle, the father of Dramatic Criticism, made Stage-Repre-

CH. XVI.

sentation one of the departments of the science; but we shall be only following the law of differentiation if we separate the two. This is especially appropriate in the case of the Shakespearean Drama. The Puritan Revolution, which has played such a part in its history, was in effect an attack rather on the Theatre than on the Drama itself. No doubt when the movement became violent the two were not discriminated, and the Drama was made a 'vanity' as well as the Stage. Still the one interest was never so thoroughly dropped by the nation and was more readily taken up again than the other; so that from the point of view of the Stage our continuity with the Elizabethan age has been severed, from the point of view of the literary Drama it has not. The Shakespearean Drama has made a field for itself as a branch of literature quite apart from the Stage; and, however we may regret the severance and look forward to a completer appreciation of Shakespeare, yet it can hardly be doubted that at the present moment as earnest and comprehensive an interest in our great dramatist is to be found in the study as in the theatre.

Drama and its Representation separate in exposition, not in idea.

Dramatic Criticism, then, is to be separated, on the one side, from the wider Literary Criticism which must include a review of language, ethics, philosophy, and general art; and, on the other hand, from the companion art of Stage-Representation. But here caution is required: it may be convenient to make Literary Drama and Stage-Representation separate branches of enquiry, it is totally inadmissible and highly misleading to divorce the two in idea. The literary play must be throughout read *relatively* to its representation. In actual practice the separation of the two has produced the greatest obstacles in the way of sound appreciation. Amongst ordinary readers of Shakespeare, Character-Interest, which is largely independent of performance, has swallowed up all other interests; and most of the effects which depend upon the connection and relative force of incidents, and on

the compression of the details into a given space, have been completely lost. Shakespeare is popularly regarded as supreme in the painting of human nature, but careless in the construction of Plot: and, worst of all, Plot itself, which it has been the mission of the English Drama to elevate into the position of the most intellectual of all elements in literary effect, has become degraded in conception to the level of a mere juggler's mystery. It must then be laid down distinctly at the outset of the present enquiry that the Drama is to be considered throughout relatively to its acting. Much of dramatic effect that is special to Stage-Representation will be here ignored: the whole mechanism of elocution, effects of light, colour and costume, the greater portion of what constitutes *mise-en-scène*. But in dealing with any play the fullest scope is assumed for ideal acting. The interpretation of a character must include what an actor can put into it; in dealing with effects regard must be had to surroundings which a reader might easily overlook, but which would be present to the eye of a spectator; and no conception of the movement of a drama will be adequate which has not appreciated the rapid sequence of incidents that crowds the crisis of a life-time or a national revolution into two or three hours of actual time. The relation of Drama to its acting will be exactly similar to that of Music to its performance, the two being perfectly separable in their exposition, but never disunited in idea.

Fundamental division of Dramatic Criticism into Human Interest and Action.

Dramatic Art, then, as thus defined, is to be the field of our enquiry, and its method is to be the discovery and arrangement of topics. For a fundamental basis of such analysis we shall naturally look to the other arts. Now all the arts agree in being the union of two elements, abstract and concrete. Music takes sensuous sounds, and adds a purely abstract element by disposing these sounds in har-

CH. XVI.

monies and melodies; architecture applies abstract design to a concrete medium of stone and wood; painting gives us objects of real life arranged in abstract groupings; in dancing we have moving figures confined in artistic bonds of rhythm; sculpture traces in still figures ideas of shape and attitude. So Drama has its two elements of *Human Interest* and *Action*: on the one hand life 'presented in action'—so the word 'Drama' may be translated; on the other hand the action itself, that is, the concurrence of all that is presented in an abstract unity of design. The two fundamental divisions of dramatic interest, and consequently the two fundamental divisions of Dramatic Criticism, will thus be Human Interest and Action. But each of these has its different sides, the distinction of which is essential before we can arrive at an arrangement of topics that will be of practical value in the methodisation of criticism. The interest of the life presented is twofold. There is our interest in the separate personages who enter into it, as so many varieties of the *genus homo*: this is Interest of *Character*. There is again our interest in the experience these personages are made to undergo, their conduct and fate: technically, Interest of *Passion*.

Twofold division of Human interest.

Human Interest { Character. Passion.

It is the same with the other fundamental element of art, the working together of all the details so as to leave an impression of unity: while in practice the sense of this unity, say in a piece of music or a play, is one of the simplest of instincts, yet upon analysis it is seen to imply three separate mental impressions. The mind, it implies, must be conscious of a unity. It must also be conscious of a complexity of details without which the unity could not be perceptible. But the mere perception of unity and of complexity would not give the art-pleasure it does give unless the unity were seen to be *developed* out of the complexity, and this brings in a third idea of progress and gradual *movement*.

Threefold division of Action.

Action { Unity. / Complexity. / Development, Succession, Movement.

Application of the threefold division of Action to the twofold division of Human Interest.

Now if we apply the threefold idea involved in Action to the twofold idea involved in Human Interest we shall get the natural divisions of dramatic analysis. One element of Human Interest was Character: looking at this in the threefold aspect which is given to it when it is connected with Action we shall have to notice the interest of single characters, or *Character-Interpretation*, the more complex interest of *Character-Contrast*, and in the third place *Character-Development*. Applying a similar treatment to the other side of Human Interest, Passion, we shall review single elements of Passion, that is to say, *Incidents and Effects*; the mixture of various passions to express which the term *Passion-Tones* will be used; and again the succession of these, or *Tone-Movement*. But Action has an interest of its own, considered in the abstract and as separate from Human Interest. This is *Plot*; and it will lend itself to the same triple treatment, falling into the natural divisions of *Single Action*, *Complex Action*, and that development of Plot which constitutes dramatic *Movement* in the most important sense. At this point it is possible only to name these leading topics of Dramatic Criticism: to explain each, and to trace them further into their lesser ramifications, will be the work of the remaining three chapters.

Elementary Topics of Dramatic Criticism.

The Literary Drama {
- Character {
  - Single Character-Interest, or *Character-Interpretation.*
  - Complex Character-Interest, or *Character-Contrast.* *Character-Development.*
- Passion {
  - Single Passion-Interest, or *Incident and Effect.*
  - Complex Passion-Interest, or *Passion-Tone.* *Tone-Movement.*
- Plot (or Pure Action) {
  - *Single Action.*
  - *Complex Action.*
  - *Plot-Movement.*

CH. XVI.

These are the topics of Dramatic Criticism strictly so-called, resting on the fundamental conception of it as a branch of science. Before passing on to the general exposition of them in the chapters that follow, it is right to notice that there are other topics belonging to the Drama in common with other branches of art, though varying in part with the varieties of medium in which they are applied. These may be classed under the general term *Mechanical Construction*: they are dependent, not on anything special to Drama, but upon our general interest in art, and in the operations of the dramatist considered as a workman. Examples of these topics have been fully discussed in various parts of the studies that have preceded: a brief enumeration will be sufficient here. One of them is the *Reduction of Difficulties* in the construction of a story and the presentation of its matter. Specially prominent amongst devices used for this purpose are *Rationalisation* and *Derationalisation*: both illustrated in *The Tempest*, where the standing difficulty of realising the supernatural is met by at once derationalising the surroundings in which the enchantment is to appear, and rationalising the supernatural element itself. Again, the sense of economy, which in so many ways enters into dramatic art, is gratified in *Constructive Economy*, by which personages and details introduced for mechanical purposes, that is to assist other effects, are also utilised for effects of their own. This has been fully illustrated in *The Merchant of Venice*; in *The Tempest* it has been further shown how such personages can be faintly affected by the movement of the play, and assist, though with a slightness proportioned to their mechanical character, in reflecting the central idea. Besides these, any *Constructive Processes* may be enrolled amongst the topics of Dramatic Art, if they are prominent enough to present an interest in themselves, apart from their bearing on the drift of the play. Such a Constructive Process is the maintenance throughout *The Tempest*

Mechanical Construction common to Drama and other arts.

Reduction of Difficulties.

page 58.

page 246, &c.

Constructive Economy.

pages 75, 282.

General Constructive Processes.

page 247.

of a *Dramatic Background* of nature artistically in harmony with the enchantment of the play[1]. Previous studies have also noticed the *Dramatic Hedging*, by which unpleasant elements in the characters of Shylock and Brutus are met by another treatment bringing out peculiarities in the position of these personages which restores them to our sympathy. As a third example of Constructive Processes may be mentioned *Preparation*: by this the final effect to which a whole play is leading up is anticipated in a modified form at an early stage of the action; as when the grand example of providential control in Prospero's treatment of his human friends and foes is, so to speak, rehearsed in the deliverance of Ariel and the judgment on Caliban.

pages 60, 176.

page 270

In general literary history *Conventionalities of Construction* have played a great part,—arbitrary limitations prescribed by literary fashion as problems of construction, chiefly interesting as feats of skill, like that of a violinist playing upon one string. An example of such conventionality is the *Scenic Unities* of Place and Time, discussed in the review of *The Tempest*. By the Unity of Place, the arrangement of the story is so limited that the scene shall always suggest itself as the same—though (as in the case of the enchanted island) different parts of this uniform scene may be exhibited in the various scenes. By the Unity of Time the story is so arranged as not to require any intervals to be supposed between consecutive scenes, the duration of the action being, roughly, the same as the duration of the performance. The time taken up by the course of events in *The Tempest* is, in so many words, limited to six hours; and the suggestion is that Prospero concludes his scheme at Ariel's intercession earlier than he intended. Such unities seem peculiarly suitable to a story of enchantment, as har-

Constructive Conventionalities.

page 269.

I. ii.

V. i. 20.

[1] This should be distinguished from the case of Dramatic Background of nature in *Julius Cæsar* (above, p. 192), which changes with the movement of the play, and is thus a dramatic motive (below, p. 393).

CH. XVI. monising with the circumscribed area and duration of a magician's power. In the case of *The Tempest*, as is usual with classical plays, the observation of these unities carries with it *Unity Devices*, such as the presentation of Prospero's story, and other important incidents anterior to the opening of the play, by means of narrative, or narrative dialogue.

Constructive Unity. But the interest of Mechanical Construction which stands out from all others is where the dramatist suggests to our sense of analysis a grasp of the unity which binds together his work into a single whole. That a play should impress itself upon our minds as a unity is only another way of saying that it is a work of art: it is a different thing when this impression of unity seems to be analysable, and can be, wholly or partially, formulated in words. The term *Dramatic Colouring* may be used where some unity of impression extends to so large a proportion of the whole mass of matter in a play as to give it a distinctive and recognisable individuality. It has been argued above that *The Tempest* is thus coloured with enchantment; and the passion of Jealousy has a similar prominence in *Othello*. It has been often remarked how the play of *Macbeth* is coloured by the superstition and violence of the Dark Ages. The world of this drama seems given over to the powers of darkness who can read, if not mould, destiny; witchcraft appears as an instrument of crime and ghostly agency of punishment. We have rebellion without any suggestion of cause to ennoble it, terminated by executions without the pomp of justice; we have a long reign of terror in which massacre is a measure of daily administration and murder is a profession. With all this there is a total absence of relief in any picture of settled life: there is no rallying-point for order and purity. The very agent of retribution gets the impulse to his task in a reaction from a shock of bereavement that has come down upon him as a natural punishment for an act of indecisive folly.

Dramatic Colouring.

compare iv. iii. 26, and iv. ii. 1–22.

Central Ideas.

Such Dramatic Colouring is, however, a thing of general impression; there is a constructive unity going beyond this in the *Central Idea*, which will bear the test of the fullest analysis as to its connection with the whole matter of a drama, characterisation, passion, and plot being all duly related to it. I am chiefly concerned to maintain that the theory of Central Ideas is a matter which admits of accurate examination, and to urge that the term should not be lightly used. A Central Idea, to be worthy of the name, should be shown to embrace all the details of the play, it must be sufficiently distinctive to exclude other plays, while the distribution of the separate parts of the play should appear to agree with their direct or indirect bearing on this central and fundamental notion. I have in previous chapters suggested, with detailed justification, such Central Ideas for *The Tempest* and for *Love's Labour's Lost*.

It is obvious that these last two topics, Dramatic Colouring and Central Ideas, are closely connected with one another. Their mutual relation is well illustrated by the fact, noted above, that the Central Idea claimed for *Love's Labour's Lost* —namely, the conflict of humour with the conventional— is also found to colour large parts of *As You Like It*, in the central scenes of which the traditional conventionality of Pastoral Life is being played upon by three different types of humour in succession.

Mechanical Construction	Reduction of Difficulties: especially, *Rationalisation* and *Derationalisation*.
	Constructive Economy: utilisation of mechanical personages and details.
	Constructive Processes: *Dramatic Background, Dramatic Hedging, Preparation*.
	Constructive Conventionalities: especially, the *Scenic Unities* of Place and Time.
	Constructive Unity: *Dramatic Colouring, Central Ideas*.

XVII.

Interest of Character.

Ch. XVII.

Unity applied to Character: Character-Interpretation.

OF the main divisions of dramatic interest Character stands first for consideration: and we are to view it under the three aspects of unity, complexity, and movement. The application of the idea unity to the idea character suggests at once our interest in single personages. This interest becomes more defined when we take into account the medium through which the personages are presented to us: characters in Drama are not brought out by abstract discussion or description, but are presented to us concretely, self-pourtrayed by their own actions without the assistance of comments from the author.

Accordingly, the leading interest of character is *Interpretation*, the mental process of turning from the concrete to the abstract: out of the most diverse details of conduct and impression Interpretation extracts a unity of conception which we call a character. Interpretation when scientifically handled must be, we have seen, of the nature of an hypothesis, the value of which depends upon the degree in which it explains whatever details have any bearing upon the character. Such an hypothesis may be a simple idea: and we have seen at length how the whole portraiture of Richard precipitates into the notion of Ideal Villainy, ideal on the subjective side in an artist who follows crime for its own sake, and on the objective side in a success that works by fascination. But the student must beware of the temptation to grasp at epigrammatic labels as

Interpretation of the nature of an hypothesis.

sufficient solutions of character. In the great majority of cases Interpretation can become complete only by recognising and harmonising various and even conflicting elements; and a practical illustration of this principle has been given above in an elaborate discussion of the difficult character of Jaques in *As You Like It.*

Canons of Interpretation. It must be exhaustive.

Incidentally we have noticed some of the principles governing careful Interpretation. One of these principles is that it must take into consideration all that is presented of a personage. It is unscientific on the face of it to say (as is repeatedly said) that Shakespeare is 'inconsistent' in ascribing deep musical sympathies to so thin a character as Lorenzo. Such allegation of inconsistency means that the process of Interpretation is unfinished; it can be paralleled only by the astronomer who should complain of eclipses as 'inconsistent' with his view of the moon's movements. In the particular case we found no difficulty in harmonising the apparent conflict: the details of Lorenzo's portraiture fit in well with the not uncommon type of nature that is so deeply touched by art sensibilities as to have a languid interest in life outside art. Again: Interpretation must look for *indirect* evidence of character, such as the impression a personage seems to have made on other personages in the story, or the effect of action outside the field of view. It is impatient induction to pronounce Bassanio unworthy of Portia merely from comparison of the parts played by the two in the drama itself. It happens from the nature of the story that the incidents actually represented in the drama are such as always display Bassanio in an exceptional and dependent position; but we have an opportunity of getting to the other side of our hero's character by observing the attitude held to him by others in the play, an attitude founded not on the incidents of the drama alone, but upon the sum total of his life and behaviour in the Venetian world. This gives a very different impression; and when we

It must take in indirect evidence;

CH. XVII. take into consideration the force with which his personality sways all who approach him, from the strong Antonio and the intellectual Lorenzo to giddy Gratiano and the rough common sense of Launcelot, then the character comes out in its proper scale. As a third principle, it is perhaps too obvious to be worth formulating that Interpretation must allow for the degree to which the character is displayed by the action: that Brutus's frigid eloquence at the funeral of Cæsar means not coldness of feeling but stoicism of public demeanour. It is a less obvious principle that the very details which are to be unified into a conception of character may have a different complexion given to them when they are looked at in the light of the whole. It has been noticed how Richard seems to manifest in some scenes a slovenliness of intrigue that might be a stumbling-block to the general impression of his character. But when in our view of him as a whole we see what a large part is played by the invincibility that is stamped on his very demeanour, it becomes clear how this slovenliness can be interpreted by the analyst, and represented by the actor, not as a defect of power, but as a trick of bearing which measures his own sense of his irresistibility. Principles like these flow naturally from the fundamental idea of character and its unity. Their practical use however will be mainly that of tests for suggested interpretations: to the actual reading of character in Drama, as in real life, the safest guide is sympathetic insight.

and the degree to which the character is displayed.

Interpretation reacting on the details.

Complexity applied to Character.

The second element underlying all dramatic effect was complexity; when complexity is applied to Character we get Character-Contrast. In its lowest degree this appears in the form of *Character-Foils*: by the side of some prominent character is placed another of less force and interest but cast in the same mould, or perhaps moulded by the influence of

Character-Foils.

its principal, just as by the side of a lofty mountain are often to be seen smaller hills of the same formation. Thus beside Portia is placed Nerissa, beside Bassanio Gratiano, beside Shylock Tubal; Richard's villainy stands out by comparison with Buckingham, Hastings, Tyrrel, Catesby, any one of whom would have given blackness enough to an ordinary drama. It is quite possible that minute examination may find differences between such companion figures: but the general effect of the combination is that the lesser serves as foil to throw up the scale on which the other is framed. The more pronounced effects of Character-Contrast depend upon differences of kind as distinguished from differences of degree. In this form it is clear how *Character-Contrast* is only an extension of Character-Interpretation: it implies that some single conception explains (that is, gives unity to) the actions of more than one person. A whole chapter has been devoted to bringing out such contrast in the case of Lord and Lady Macbeth: to accept these as types of the practical and inner life, cast in such an age and involved in such an undertaking, furnishes a conception sufficient to make clear and intelligible all that the two say and do in the scenes of the drama. Character-Contrast is especially common amongst the minor figures of a Shakespearean drama. In the case of personages demanded by the necessities of the story rather than introduced for their own sake Shakespeare has a tendency to double the number of such characters for the sake of getting effects of contrast. We have two unsuccessful suitors in *The Merchant of Venice* bringing out, the one the unconscious pride of royal birth, the other the pride of intense self-consciousness; two wicked daughters of Lear, Goneril with no shading in her harshness, Regan who is in reality a degree more calculating in her cruelty than her sister, but conceals it under a charm of manner, 'eyes that comfort and not burn.' Of the two princes in *Richard III* the one has a gravity

Character-Contrast.

Duplication.

CH. XVII. beyond his years, while York overflows with not ungraceful pertness. Especially interesting are the two murderers in that play. The first is a dull, 'strong-framed' man, without
i. iv, from 84. any better nature. The second has had culture, and been accustomed to reflect; his better nature has been vanquished by love of greed, and now asserts itself to prevent his sinning with equanimity. It is the second murderer whose
110. conscience is set in activity by the word 'judgment'; and he
124–157. discourses on conscience, deeply, yet not without humour, as he recognises the power of the expected reward over the oft-vanquished compunctions. He catches, as a thoughtful
167. man, the irony of the duke's cry for wine when they are about to drown him in the butt of malmsey. Again, instead
165. of hurrying to the deed while Clarence is waking he cannot resist the temptation to argue with him, and so, as a man
263. open to argument, he feels the force of Clarence's unexpected suggestion:

> He that set you on
> To do this deed will hate you for the deed.

Thus he exhibits the weakness of all thinking men in a moment of action, the capacity to see two sides of a question; and, trying at the critical moment to alter his
284. course, he ends by losing the reward of crime without escaping the guilt.

Character-Grouping. Character-Contrast is carried forward into *Character-Grouping* when the field is still further enlarged, and a single conception is found to give unity to more than two personages of a drama. A chapter has been devoted to showing how the same antithesis of outer and inner life which made the conception of Macbeth and his wife intelligible would serve, when adapted to the widely different world of Roman political life, to explain the characters of the leading conspirators in *Julius Cæsar*, of their victim and of his avenger: while, over and above the satisfaction of Interpretation, the Grouping of these four figures, so colossal and so

impressive, round a single idea is an interest in itself. It has been shown, again, how the principal personages in *Othello* can be grouped about the idea of Suspicious Jealousy. In *Love's Labour's Lost* the underplot is made up of two Character Groups: one, coloured by Euphuism, centering around Armado, while the other centers round Holofernes and is distinguished by Pedantry.

There are, then, two distinct effects that arise when complexity enters into Character-Interest. The complexity is one never separable from the unity which binds it together: in the first effect the diversity is stronger than the unity, and the whole manifests itself as Character-Contrast; in Character-Grouping the contrast of the separate figures is an equal element with the unity which binds them all into a group.

Movement applied to Character: Character Development.

When to Character-Interpretation, the formation of a single conception out of a multitude of concrete details, the further idea of growth and progress is added, we get the third variety of Character-Interest—*Character-Development.* In the preceding chapters this has received only negative notice, its absence being a salient feature in the portraiture of Richard. For a positive illustration no better example could be desired than the character of Macbeth. Three features, we have seen, stand out clear in the general conception of Macbeth. There is his eminently practical nature, which is the key to the whole. And the absence in him of the inner life adds two special features: one is his helplessness under suspense, the other is the activity of his imagination with its susceptibility to supernatural terrors. Now, if we fix our attention on these three points they become three threads of development as we trace Macbeth through the stages of his career. His practical power developes as capacity for crime. Macbeth undertook his first crime only after a protracted and terrible struggle; the murder of the

CH. XVII. grooms was a crime of impulse; the murder of Banquo appears a thing of contrivance, in which Macbeth is a deliberate planner directing the agency of others, while his dark hints to his wife suggest the beginning of a relish for such deeds. This capacity for crime continues to grow, until slaughter becomes an end in itself—

iii. ii. 40, &c.

iv. iii. 4.

> Each new morn
> New widows howl, new orphans cry:

and then a mania:

v. ii. 13.

> Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him
> Do call it valiant fury.

We see a parallel development in Macbeth's impatience of suspense. Just after his first temptation he is able to brace himself to suspense for an indefinite period:

i. iii. 143.

> If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
> Without my stir.

i. vii. On the eve of his great crime the suspense of the few hours that must intervene before the banquet can be despatched and Duncan can retire becomes intolerable to Macbeth, and he is for abandoning the project. In the next stage it is the suspense of a single moment that impels him to stab the grooms. From this point suspense no longer comes by fits and starts, but is a settled disease: his mind is as scorpions; it is tortured in restless ecstasy. Suspense has undermined his judgment and brought on him the gambler's fever—the haunting thought that just one more venture will make him safe; in spite of the opposition of his reason—which his unwillingness to confide the murder of Banquo to his wife betrays—he is carried on to work the additional crime which unmasks the rest. And finally suspense intensifies to a panic, and he himself feels that his deeds

iii. ii. 13, 36, &c.

iii. ii. 45.

iii. iv. 140.

> must be acted ere they may be scann'd.

The third feature in Macbeth is the quickening of his sen-

sitiveness to the supernatural side by side with the deadening of his conscience. Imagination becomes, as it were, a pictorial conscience for one to whom its more rational channels have been closed: the man who 'would jump the world to come' accepts implicitly every word that falls from a witch. Now this imagination is at first a restraining force in Macbeth: the thought whose image unfixes his hair leads him to abandon the treason. When later he has, under pressure, delivered himself again to the temptation, there are still signs that imagination is a force on the other side that has to be overcome:

i. iii. 134.

> Stars, hide your fires; i. iv. 50.
> Let not light see my black and deep desires:
> The eye wink at the hand.

Once passed the boundary of the accomplished deed he becomes an absolute victim to terrors of conscience in supernatural form. In the very first moment they reach so near the boundary that separates subjective and objective that a real voice appears to be denouncing the issue of his crime:

ii. ii. 22–46.

> *Macbeth.* Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more.' . . .
> *Lady M.* Who was it that thus cried?

In the reaction from the murder of Banquo the supernatural appearance—which no eye sees but his own—appears more real to him than the real life around him. And from this point he *seeks* the supernatural, forces it to disclose its terrors, and thrusts himself into an agonised vision of generations that are to witness the triumph of his foes.

iii. iv. iv. i. 48.

XVIII.

Interest of Passion.

HUMAN Interest includes not only varieties of human nature, or Character, but also items of human experience, or Passion. Passion is the second great topic of Dramatic Criticism. It is concerned with the life that is lived through the scenes of the story, as distinguished from the personages who live it; not treating this with the abstract treatment that belongs to Plot, but reviewing it in the light of its human interest; it embraces conduct still alive with the motives which have actuated it—fate in the process of forging. The word 'passion' signifies primarily what is suffered of good or bad; secondarily the emotions generated by suffering, whether in the sufferer or in bystanders. Its use as a dramatic term thus suggests how in Drama an experience can be grasped by us through our emotional nature, through our sympathy, our antagonism, and all the varieties of emotional interest that lie between. To this Passion we have to apply the threefold division of unity, complexity, and movement.

Unity applied to Passion.

When unity is applied to Passion we get a series of details bound together into a singleness of impression as an Incident, a Situation, or an Effect. The distinction of the three rests largely on their different degrees of fragmentariness.

Incident.

Incidents are groups of continuous details forming a complete interest in themselves as ministering to our sense of story. The suit of Shylock against Antonio in the course of which fate swings right round; the murder of Clarence with its long-drawn agony; Richard and Buckingham with the

Lord Mayor and Citizens exhibiting a picture of political manipulation in the fifteenth century; the startling sight of a Lady Anne wooed beside the bier of her murdered husband's murdered father, by a murderer who rests his suit on the murders themselves; Banquo's Ghost appearing at the feast at which Banquo's presence had been so vehemently called for; Lear's faithful Gloucester so brutally blinded and so instantly avenged; the outraged Brabantio at midnight impeaching before the Duke's throne the unnatural wooer of his daughter, and seeing all Venice draw to his adversary's side; the chain of discovery forged by fate for the Celibates of Navarre by which each hoping to surprise the others is himself taken by surprise; a mysterious concurrence of circumstances luring on Antonio and Sebastian to a deed of murder, and reversing itself to check them in the moment of action:—all these are complete stories presented in a single view, and suggest how Shakespeare's dramas are constructed out of materials which are themselves dramas in miniature.

Situation.

In *Situation*, on the other hand, a series of details cohere into a single impression without losing the sense of incompleteness. The two central personages in *The Merchant of Venice*, around whom brightness and gloom have been revolving in such contrast, at last brought to face one another from the judgment-seat and the dock; Lorenzo and Jessica wrapped in moonlight and music, with the rest of the universe for the hour blotted out into a background for their love; Rosalind from under the shelter of her disguise enjoying the sport of dictating to her unsuspecting lover how he should woo her; Margaret like an apparition of the sleeping Nemesis of Lancaster flashed into the midst of the Yorkist courtiers while they are bickering through very wantonness of victory; Shylock pitted against Tubal, Jew against Jew, the nature not too narrow to mix affection with avarice, mocked from passion to passion by the nature only wide

CH. XVIII. enough to take in greed; Richard waking on Bosworth morning, and miserably piecing together the wreck of his invincible will which a sleeping vision has shattered; Macbeth's moment of rapture in following the airy dagger, while the very night holds its breath to break out again presently into voices of doom; the panic mist of universal suspicion amidst which Malcolm blasts his own character to feel after the fidelity of Macduff; Edgar from his ambush of outcast idiocy watching the sad marvel of his father's love restored to him; Prospero surveying the unbroken range of his omnipotence in the very act of renouncing it:—all these brilliant Situations are fragments of dramatic continuity in which the fragmentariness is a part of the interest. Just as the sense of sculpture might seek to arrest and perpetuate a casual moment in the evolutions of a dance, so in Dramatic Situation the mind is conscious of isolating something from what precedes and what follows so as to extract out of it an additional impression; the morsel has its purpose in ministering to a complete process of digestion, but it gets a sensation of its own by momentary delay in contact with the palate.

Effect. Of a still more fragmentary nature is *Dramatic Effect*—Effect strictly so called, and as distinguished from the looser use of the term for dramatic impressions in general. Such Effect seems to attach itself to single momentary details, though in reality these details owe their impressiveness to their connection with others: the final detail has completed an electric circle and a shock is given. No element of the Drama is of so miscellaneous a character and so defies analysis: all that can be done here is to notice three special Dramatic Effects.

Irony as an Effect. *Dramatic Irony* is a sudden appearance of double-dealing in surrounding events: a dramatic situation accidentally starts up and produces a shock by its bearing upon conflicting states of affairs, both known to the audience, but one

of them hidden from some of the parties to the scene. This is the special contribution to dramatic effect of Greek tragedy. The ancient stage was tied down in its subject-matter to stories perfectly familiar to the audience as sacred legends, and so almost excluding the effect of surprise: in Irony it found some compensation. The ancient tragedies harp upon human blindness to the future, and delight to exhibit a hero speculating about, or struggling with, or perhaps in careless talk stumbling upon, the final issue of events which the audience know so well;—Œdipus, for example, through great part of a play moving heaven and earth to pierce the mystery of the judgment that has come upon his city, while according to the familiar sacred story the offender can be none other than himself. Shakespeare has used to almost as great an extent as the Greek dramatists this effect of Irony. His most characteristic handling of it belongs to the lighter plays, in which the touches of Irony will often be so numerous as to amount to a Motive[1]; yet in the group of dramas dealt with in this work it is prominent amongst his effects. It has been pointed out how *Macbeth* and *Richard III* are saturated with it. There are casual illustrations in *Julius Cæsar*, as when the dictator bids his intended murderer—

> Be near me, that I may remember you; — ii. ii. 123.

or in *Lear*, when Edmund, intriguing guiltily with Goneril, in a chance expression of tenderness unconsciously paints the final issue of that intrigue:

> Yours in the ranks of death! — iv. ii. 25.

The pathos of Desdemona's position in the latter part of *Othello* produces some wonderful strokes of Irony. One has been pointed out in the chapter on that play; another is where in all her simplicity she turns to the author of her ruin:

> O good Iago,
> What shall I do to win my lord again?

[1] See below, page 388 note.

CH. XVIII. A comic variety of Irony occurs in the Trial Scene of *The Merchant of Venice*, when Bassanio and Gratiano in their
iv. i. 282. distracted grief are willing to sacrifice their new wives if this could save their friend—little thinking these wives are so near to record the vow. The doubleness of Irony is one which attaches to a situation as a whole: the effect however is
iii. ii. 60-73. especially keen when a scene is so impregnated with it that the very language is true in a double sense.

> *Catesby.* 'Tis a vile thing to die, my gracious lord,
> When men are unprepared and look not for it.
> *Hastings.* O monstrous, monstrous! and so falls it out
> With Rivers, Vaughan, Grey: *and so 'twill do*
> *With some men else, who think themselves as safe*
> *As thou and I.*

Nemesis as an Effect. *Nemesis*, though usually extending to the general movement of a drama, and so considered below, may sometimes be only an effect of detail—a sign connecting very closely retribution with sin or reaction with triumph. Such a nemesis may be
v. iii. 45. seen where Cassius in the act of falling on his sword recognises the weapon as the same with which he stabbed Cæsar.

Dramatic Foreshadowing. Another special variety of effect is *Dramatic Foreshadowing*—mysterious details pointing to an explanation in the sequel, a realisation in action of the saying that coming events cast their shadows before them. The unaccountable
i. i. 1. 'sadness' of Antonio at the opening of *The Merchant of Venice* is a typical illustration. Others will readily suggest
iii. i. 68. themselves—the Prince's shuddering aversion to the Tower
i. i. 39. in *Richard III*, the letter G that of Edward's heirs the
v. i. 77-90. murderer should be, the crows substituted for Cassius's eagles on the morning of the final battle. A more elaborate example is seen in *Julius Cæsar*, where the soothsayer's
i. ii. 18. vague warning 'Beware the Ides of March'—a solitary voice that could yet arrest the hero through the shouting of the
iii. i. 1. crowd—is found later on not to have become dissipated, but to have gathered definiteness as the moment comes nearer:

Cæsar. The Ides of March are come.
Soothsayer. Ay, Cæsar; but not gone.

And the supreme example of Dramatic Foreshadowing is the scene in *Othello* when Desdemona is retiring to bed on the fatal night, under an irresistible weight of boding. She bids her marriage sheets be laid on the bed, and adds— iv. iii.

> If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me
> In one of those same sheets.

Her mother's maid Barbara, who died of love, comes persistently into her mind, and when she tries to talk of other topics, the wailing burden of Barbara's song keeps reviving. The shadow of the murder has already enveloped her.

These three leading effects may be sufficient to illustrate a branch of dramatic analysis in which the variety is endless.

Complexity applied to Passion.

We are next to consider the application of complexity to Passion, and the contrasts of passion that so arise. Here care is necessary to avoid confusion with a complexity of passion that hardly comes within the sphere of dramatic criticism. In the scene in which Shylock is being teased by Tubal it is easy to note the conflict between the passions of greed and paternal affection: such analysis is outside dramatic criticism and belongs to psychology. In its dramatic sense Passion applies to experience, not decomposed into its emotional elements, but grasped as a whole by our emotional nature: there is still room for complexity of such passion in the appeal made *to different sides of our emotional nature, the serious and the gay.* In dealing with this element of dramatic effect a convenient technical term is *Tone.* The deep insight of metaphorical word-coining has given universal sanction to the expression of emotional differences by analogies of music: our emotional nature is exalted with mirth and depressed with sorrow, we speak of a chord of sympathy, a iii. i.

Passion-Tone.

CH. XVIII. strain of triumph, a note of despair; we are in a serious mood, or pitch our appeal in a higher key. These expressions are clearly musical, and there is probably a half association of music in many others, such as a theme of sorrow, acute anguish, and profound despair, response of gratitude, or even the working of our feelings. Most exactly to the purpose is a phrase of frequent occurrence, the 'gamut of the passions,' which brings out with emphasis how our emotional nature in its capacity for different kinds of impressions suggests a *scale* of passion-contrasts, not to be sharply defined but shading off into one another like the tones of a musical scale—Tragic, Heroic, Serious, Elevated, Light, Comic, Farcical. It is with such complexity of tones that Dramatic Passion is concerned.

Scale of Passion-Tones.

Mixture of Tones:

Now this *Mixture of Tones*, or inclusion of different tones in the field of the same play, is for the Shakespearean drama a most important department of dramatic interest. In *The Merchant of Venice*, as often in plays of Shakespeare, every tone in the scale is represented. When Antonio is enduring through the long suspense, and triumphant malignity is gaining point after point against helpless friendship, we have travelled far into the Tragic; the woman-nature of Portia calling Venetian justice from judicial murder to the divine prerogative of mercy throws in a touch of the Heroic; a great part of what centres around Shylock, when he is crushing the brightness out of Jessica or defying the Christian world, is pitched in the Serious strain; the incidents of the unsuccessful suitors, the warm exuberance of Oriental courtesy and the less grateful loftiness of Spanish family pride, might be a model for the Elevated drama of the English Restoration; the infinite nothings of Gratiano, prince of diners-out, the more piquant small talk of Portia and Nerissa when they criticise the man-world from the secrecy of a maiden-bower—these throw a tone of Lightness over their sections of the drama; Launcelot is an incarnation of the

iv. i.

iv. i. 184.

ii. v; iii. i, &c.

ii. i, vii; ii. ix.

i. i, &c. i. ii.

ii. ii, iii; iii. v, &c.

conventional Comic serving-man, and his Comedy becomes broad Farce where he teases the sand-blind Gobbo and draws him on to bless his astonishing beard. Such Mixture of Tones can be appreciated from contrast with the Classical Drama, where it was found impossible. The exclusive and uncompromising spirit of antiquity carried caste into art itself, and their Tragedy and Comedy were kept rigidly separate, and indeed were connected with different rituals. The spirit of modern life is marked by its comprehensiveness and reconciliation of opposites; and nothing is more important in dramatic history than the way in which Shakespeare and his contemporaries created a new departure in art, by seizing upon the rude jumble of sport and earnest which the mob loved, and converting it into a source of stirring passion-effects. For a new faculty of mental grasp is generated by this harmony of tones in the English Drama. If the artist introduces every tone into the story he thereby gets hold of every tone in the spectator's emotional nature; the world of the play is presented from every point of view as it works upon the various passions, and the difference this makes is the difference between simply looking down upon a surface and viewing a solid from all round:—the mixture of tones, so to speak, makes passion of three dimensions. Moreover it brings the world of fiction nearer to the world of nature, which has never yet evolved an experience in which brightness was dissevered from gloom: half the pleasure of the world is wrung out of others' pain; the two jostle in the street, house together under every roof, share every stage of life, and refuse to be sundered even in the mysteries of death.

ii. ii, from 34.

a distinction of the modern Drama.

Tone-Clash.

Complexity of Passion arises in its most pronounced form when opposing tones of passion *clash* in the same incident and are *fused* together. These terms are, I think, scarcely metaphorical: as a physiological fact we see our physical susceptibility to pleasurable and painful emotions drawn into

CH. XVIII. conflict with one another in the phenomena of hysteria, and their mental analogues must be capable of much closer union. As examples of these effects resting upon an appeal to opposite sides of our emotional nature at the same time may be instanced the flash of comic irony, already referred to more than once, that starts up in the most pathetic moment of Antonio's trial by his friend's allusion to his newly wedded wife. Of the same double nature are the strokes of pathetic humour in this play; as where Antonio describes himself so worn with grief that he will hardly spare a pound of flesh to his bloody creditor; or again his pun,

iv. i. 288, &c.

iii. iii. 32.

iv. i. 280.

> For if the Jew do cut but deep enough
> I'll pay it presently with all my heart!

A play upon the same word, more elaborate and in equally pathetic circumstances, is found in Antony's lament over Cæsar's body—

iii. i. 204.

> Here wast thou bay'd, brave hart;
> Here didst thou fall; and here thy hunters stand,
> Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.
> O world, thou wast the forest to this hart;
> And this indeed, O world, the heart of thee.

Shakespeare seems to regard the pun as the established form for expression of these hysterical stages of emotion; for the pun is distinguished by the clashing between sound and sense, and so is fitted to be an outward symbol for clashings of emotion where grief unnaturally laughs, and laughter grows to tears.

Humour the climax of Tone-Clash.

But these casual and isolated clashings of Passion-Tones are swallowed up in the wider Humour, the most volatile and unanalysable of all varieties of dramatic effect. Humour cannot exist without some conflict of opposites, or of things incongruous; and the more the incongruity the greater is the humour. If, by a change of metaphor, the various Passion-Tones be regarded as different colours, then Humour is the white light made by their fusion or rapid alternation.

Humour is thus the climax of Tone-Clash; and it is nowhere clearer to the eye of analysis than in the two plays of *Love's Labour's Lost* and *As You Like It*, in which, as two chapters have been devoted to showing, the dominant effect is the perpetual clashings between humour and things which are its antipathetic, resulting in tours-de-force of comic brilliance.

Tone-Storm.

Tone-Clash rises into Tone-Storm in such rare climaxes as the centre-piece of *Lear*, where, against a tempest of nature as a fitting background, we have the conflict of three madnesses—the madness of fury, of idiocy and of folly: each in itself is a fusion of several passion-tones, but here we have them bidding against one another, and inflaming each other's wildness into an inextricable whirl of frenzy. A comic counterpart to this may be found in *As You Like It*, where, as already pointed out, the three types of natural, professional and morbid humour, besides playing upon the various conventionalities and affectations of the story, are in some of the central scenes pitted against one another, and thus throw up the middle part of this comedy with a perfect tempest of humorous passion.

Movement (or Succession) applied to Passion.

Not only is dramatic interest susceptible to these varied tones of passion in a play, but it catches a further effect from their alternation and succession. We here reach the application to Passion of the third element in action—movement, development, succession. The new type of dramatic interest is most simply illustrated from the companion art of music, where we are accustomed to find an adagio and an allegro, a fantastic scherzo and a pompous march, included within the same symphony or sonata, though in separate movements. Such alternations may be technically described as Tone-Play or Tone-Relief.

Tone-Play is made by simple variety and alternation of *Tone-Play.*

CH. XVIII. light and serious passions. It has been pointed out in a previous chapter what a striking example of this is *The Merchant of Venice*, in which scene by scene two stories of youthful love and of deadly feud alternate with one another as they progress to their climaxes, until from the
iii. ii. 221. rapture of Portia united to Bassanio we drop to the full realisation of Antonio in the grasp of Shylock; and again the cruel anxiety of the trial and its breathless shock of deliver-
iv. i. 408. ance are balanced by the mad fun of the ring trick and the joy
v. i. of the moonlight scene which Jessica feels is too deep for mer-
Tone-Relief. riment. A slight variation of this is *Tone-Relief*: in an action which is cast in a uniform tone the continuity is broken by a brief spell of a contrary passion, the contrast at once relieving and intensifying the prevailing tone. One of the best examples (notwithstanding its coarseness) is the introduction
ii. iii. 1. in *Macbeth* of the jolly Porter, who keeps the impatient nobles outside in the storm till his jest is comfortably finished, making each furious knock fit in to his elaborate conceit of Hell-gate. This tone of broad farce, with nothing else like it in the whole play, comes as a single ray of common daylight to separate the agony of the dark night's murder from the
iii. i, ii, iii. agony of the struggle for concealment. A not dissimiliar effect is in *Othello*, where the terrible Suggestion Scenes —carrying on the action of the drama from the first request of Cassio for Desdemona's assistance up to the point where the ruin of both is vowed by Othello and Iago on their knees—are fringed off from the rest of the play by two morsels of farce from the Clown. In the first he chaffs the musicians and conveys the general's orders to cease playing, unless they happen to have some music that is inaudible; in the second he will not obey Desdemona's order to call Cassio without a word-combat over the double sense of the word 'lie.' And these make the only appearance of the Clown in the whole play.

Such word-play as that of this Clown seems to be re-

cognised by Shakespeare as a regular dramatic weapon, useful for tone-relief and other purposes; and in *Love's Labour's Lost* I have illustrated[1] how, where the interest of the story stands still for a moment, the interval is filled up with this other interest of mental fencing. But Shakespeare has another device in his repertoire, of the highest literary importance, capable of marking the most delicate changes of tone in his scenes. This is the alternation between prose and verse, or between different styles of verse.

Devices of Tone-Relief: Word-play,

and alternation of Verse and Prose.

This Shakespearean usage is not one that stands by itself: it has its parallels in other divisions of the universal drama. A leading feature of ancient classical dramas is the subtle play of emotions they express by changes from iambics—the Greek form of blank verse—to lyric measures. I am not alluding to the purely lyric odes sung by the Chorus between the scenes, but to the alternations between iambs and lyric measures in the episodes on the stage. So in the late Romantic Drama, such as Goethe's *Faust*, every possible variation of measure, including prose as non-measure, is made use of to fit in with variations of feeling to be expressed. And when we come to Shakespeare himself, there are signs in his earlier plays (notably in *Midsummer Night's Dream*) of an attempt to use the variation between blank verse and rhyme as a means of conveying changes in tone. But this was abandoned as he followed his original genius more and more; and the bolder device of variation between blank verse and prose took more and more hold on him.

The point to be emphasised is, not that any particular class of emotions is associated with any particular metrical form, but that *changes* of tone are reflected in *changes* between metre and metre, or metre and prose. Of course it will usually happen that the more elevated tone or more agitated passion will have verse rather than prose for its medium. But this is not universally the case. In the finale of Goethe's

[1] See page 288.

CH. XVIII. *Faust* the awakening from the dissipation of the Walpurgis Night to the full agony of knowing Margaret's fate is marked by a sudden drop to prose; and no device could better convey the shock of awakening. In *Macbeth*, where nearly the whole play is in blank verse, prose is reserved for the climax of the Sleep-walking Scene. So in the great Suggestion Scenes of *Othello*, the hero's passion has mounted in
IV i. 34. intensity until at the breaking pitch he changes from verse to prose just before he falls down in a fit.

A very late play, *The Tempest*, illustrates the delicate changes or varieties Shakespeare is able to suggest by this means.
I. i. The bustle of the Shipwreck is conveyed in rough prose; but when the courtiers realise that death is before them the language rises to verse.

> *Gon.* The king and prince at prayers! let's assist them,
> For our case is as theirs.

But after a while Gonzalo is unable to keep down his native sense of humour, and there is a change back to prose.

> Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground. . . . The wills above be done! but I would fain die a dry death.

I. ii. Then a change to mellifluous verse exquisitely conveys our passing within the magic circle of the Enchanted Island. A
II. i. later scene is a conversation between the whole party of courtiers; Gonzalo essaying to console the bereaved King keeps up the main thread of conversation in verse, while Sebastian and Antonio, chaffing Gonzalo in an undertone, use prose. But when Gonzalo can no longer ignore their
20. interruptions he turns on them in prose, and the conversation becomes general, prose being spoken until the King elevates
106. the tone, when he breaks silence, and pours out his sorrows in verse. The talk has now to be addressed to the King; and even Sebastian and Antonio use verse. Gonzalo, to
143. divert the King from painful subjects, puts (in verse) his

project for a golden age, and Sebastian and Antonio resume CH. XVIII.
in prose their comments in an undertone. But at last the
King is irritated by Gonzalo's well-meant but tiresome loqua- 171.
ciousness, and expresses his irritation in prose: this checks
altogether the elevated tone of the conversation, and Gonzalo
turns to exchange prose sarcasms with his tormentors, till the
main bulk of the party fall asleep under the charm of Ariel.
The startling suddenness of this drives the King into verse, 191.
and, when he too has joined the sleepers, the hideous
suggestiveness of the situation to the traitors keeps them at
the white heat of verse all through their conspiracy to the
end of the scene.

In the case of Caliban, fine dramatic effects are got out of
the variations between prose and verse. In his first ap- I. ii. 321.
pearance the scene is an exchange of fierce passion between
himself and his master, and is in verse throughout. He next III. ii. 1.
enters pouring out the passion of the previous scene in curses
of blank verse. Then Trinculo and Stephano enter, and the
total change of tone is marked by change to prose; until
Stephano pours liquor from his bottle down Caliban's throat. 97.
The effect of liquor on Caliban is to make him worship the
drunken butler as a god; and this effect is finely opened by
Caliban's first words rising into verse: 121.

> These be fine things, an if they be not sprites.
> That's a brave god, and bears celestial liquor.

So to the end of the scene (except a single morsel of musical 130.
prose) Caliban addresses his god in verse—the tone sharply
contrasting with the speeches of Trinculo and Stephano in
prose. When the party reappear the general situation is III. ii.
continued: but here a very subtle transition is to be noted.
Caliban, his eyes 'set in his head' with drunken worship of
Stephano, can hardly be induced to speak at all; when
compelled, he addresses his god in a line of musical verse: 26

> How does thy honour? Let me lick thy shoe—

CH. XVIII. but in the very next line drops to prose to express his attitude to Trinculo, whom he does not worship:

> I'll not serve him; he's not valiant.

A quarrel ensues, and breaks the serene tone of worship, prose continuing to the beginning of Caliban's tale; when the interruption, *Thou liest*, drives Caliban to passion and to
52. blank verse—which he maintains through his prayer and his joy at its acceptance to the end of the scene, Stephano and Trinculo, of course, continuing to talk in prose. When we
IV. i. 194. next see the party the relations of the three are maintained; and the contrast of tone between Caliban, intent on his treason now all but consummated, and his companions too drunk to be kept quiet though a sound may ruin all, is admirably conveyed by the alternations between the verse of Caliban and the prose of the other two. In the Finale
V. i. 261. Caliban is confronted by his master, and the sight of a new civilisation, and speaks his repentance in verse [1].

[1] I may here remark, anticipating the subject of a later chapter, that alternations between verse and prose are also used by Shakespeare to emphasise changes in dramatic 'movement'; though not (so far as I have observed) in the plays reviewed in this book. One example is in *Measure for Measure*. A great note of Shakespeare's action is his contrivance of a central turning-point to the movement—somewhere in the middle Act, and often at its exact centre. In *Measure for Measure* the passion of the *complication* reaches its height in the terrible scene between Claudio and his sister (III. i.). Where the agony is at its highest enters the (disguised) Duke (152), whom the audience recognise (being in the secret of his disguise from I. iii.) as representing the *resolving force* of the plot: and the Duke at once draws Isabella aside, and commences with her the intrigue which proves the resolution of the whole play. Now this central turning-point, or passage from the complication to the resolution, is emphasised by a change from verse to prose: and every one must feel how the shock of this change gives additional effect to the turn in the movement.

A precisely parallel case is *Winter's Tale*. In no play is the passage from complication to resolution so clearly marked as here. In the course of the middle Act (III. iii. 58), Antigonus deposits the infant, and exit, pursued by a bear—the complication which is connected with Sicilia is

Alternations between one metre and another.

The extension of this usage by which variations between one metre and another are added to variations between metre and prose, as devices for conveying changes of tone, is characteristic, as has been already remarked, of Shakespeare's early plays. In his later works it has left only slight traces. Every reader is familiar with the use of a rhymed couplet at the close of a scene. Akin to this is the indication by a rhymed couplet of a resolution formed, or the termination of a train of thought. A fine example of this is to be found in Macbeth's rhymed soliloquy breaking a scene of blank verse.

> The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step
> On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
> For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
> Let not light see my black and deep desires:
> The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,
> Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

i. iv. 48; compare iii. 146.

It is, again, only natural that the more artificial measure should be used to convey what is consciously artificial language; thus, when Desdemona, to fill up a moment of waiting, calls upon Iago for an exercise in praising her, he puts his praises of women in rhyme, till he reaches the famous conclusion:

> She was a wight, if ever such wight were—
> To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.

One of the plays treated in this book, *Love's Labour's Lost*, has claims to be considered Shakespeare's earliest original play, and it is found to be the one in which his metrical repertoire is most varied. We may erect a metrical scale, at the bottom of which is prose; next in order comes blank verse; rhymed couplets are a degree more elevated; and

played out. Then the Shepherd and Clown enter and discover the child—the resolution of the plot and the Bohemian side of the story begin. This change from complication to resolution is marked by a change from verse to prose.

CH. XVIII. at the top come measures more lyrical than the couplet, such as alternate rhyming, or even trochaic and anapæstic rhythms[1]. The alternation of these three metrical styles is

iv. iii. well illustrated in the central scene of the play, where the perjured celibates discover one another. Biron is the first on the ground, and his soliloquy is in prose. The scene can hardly be said to have commenced until the arrival of another of the band, to be followed at intervals by the rest, each to expose in fancied solitude the perjury which is to be over-

26. heard. From this point the scene may be said to be in the medium measure of rhymed couplets, broken by brief drops

e.g. 21, 48, &c. to prose or irregular verse where the different parts of the scene join on to one another, and rising to climaxes of the elaborate lyrics. Thus three of the lovers read amatory effusions in lyrics[2]; the comments on these are in couplets,

45–6, 85–6, &c. and often a line of comment from one place of concealment is, to the ear of the audience, capped by a rhyme from another. Where the lovers spring in succession from their concealment the battle still rages in couplets, until a great change is made in the spirit of the scene by Biron, who abandons his

214. annoyance at being discovered for justification of his perjury on the ground that his Rosaline surpasses the mistresses of all the rest. This change is reflected in a change to alternate rhyming, and in this metre the climax of the scene continues.

284. At last another break in the scene comes when the king proposes to take things as they are and boldly justify them, and he calls on Biron for reasons, such as may serve to cheat the devil. Biron responds, and his immensely long speech is in blank verse, here heard for the first time in the scene.

[1] Trochaics in iv. iii. 101–20; anapæstics ii. i. from 217 to end. The Globe edition marks a good deal of the talk between Holofernes and Sir Nathaniel as verse: but it is verse such as these pedants alone could scan and classify. [E.g. iv. ii.]

[2] A piece of lyrics in alternate rhyme regularly closes with rhymed couplets; e.g. Longaville's effusion, 60–73.

This continues to the end, except that a scene of such metrical varieties cannot be wound up with merely the ordinary couplet, but has for its coda a couple of couplets followed by a quatrain of alternate rhymes.

Bir. For revels, dances, masks and merry hours
Forerun fair Love, strewing her way with flowers.
King. Away, away! no time shall be omitted
That will betime, and may by us be fitted.
Bir. Allons! allons! Sow'd cockle reap'd no corn;
And justice always whirls in equal measure:
Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn;
If so, our copper buys no better treasure.

XIX.

Interest of Plot: Statics.

Ch. XIX.

Idea of Plot as the application of design to human life.

We now come to the third great division of Dramatic Criticism—Plot, or the purely intellectual side of action. Action itself has been treated above as the mutual connection and interweaving of all the details in a work of art so as to unite in an impression of unity. But we have found it impossible to discuss Character and Passion entirely apart from such action and interworking: the details of human interest become dramatic by being permeated with action-force. When however this mutual relation of all the parts is looked at by itself, as an abstract interest of design, the human life being no more than the material to which this design is applied, then we get the interest of Plot. So defined, I hope Plot is sufficiently removed from the vulgar conception of it as sensational mystery, which has done so much to lower this element of dramatic effect in the eyes of literary students. If Plot be understood as the extension of design to the sphere of human life, threads of experience being woven into a symmetrical pattern as truly as varicoloured threads of wool are woven into a piece of woolwork, then the conception of it will come out in its true dignity. What else is such reduction to order than the meeting-point of science and art? Science is engaged in tracing rhythmic movements in the beautiful confusion of the heavenly bodies, or reducing the bewildering variety of

external nature to regular species and nice gradations of life. Similarly, art continues the work of creation in calling ideal order out of the chaos of things as they are. And so the tangle of life, with its jumble of conflicting aspirations, its crossing and twisting of contrary motives, its struggle and partnership of the whole human race, in which no two individuals are perfectly alike and no one is wholly independent of the rest—this has gradually in the course of ages been laboriously traced by the scientific historian into some such harmonious plan as evolution. But he finds himself long ago anticipated by the dramatic artist, who has touched crime and seen it link itself with nemesis, who has transformed passion into pathos, who has received the shapeless facts of reality and returned them as an ordered economy of design. This application of form to human life is Plot: and Shakespeare has had no higher task to accomplish than in his revolutionising our ideas of Plot, until the old critical conceptions of it completely broke down when applied to his dramas. The appreciation of Shakespeare will not be complete until he is seen to be as subtle a weaver of plots as he is a deep reader of the human heart.

As with Character and Passion, so Plot is to be considered in its three aspects of unity, complexity and movement. But the last is at once of special importance in itself, and different in nature from the other two. It has been already noted how the analysis which traces unity and complexity treats the drama as a finished whole, and may piece together into one elements of effect drawn from different parts of the play; movement, on the contrary, is tied to the succession of incidents as they stand in the story. The difference is parallel to the difference between the two sides of mechanical science: Statics treating matter in repose, and Dynamics considering matter in relation to motion. It will be convenient in the present treatment to separate movement from the other two divisions: the present Chapter will deal with the

CH. XIX. interest of Plot which is Statical[1], and the Dynamics of Plot will be left to the following Chapter.

Unity applied to Plot.

The Single Action.

The simplest element of Plot is the *Single Action*, which may be defined as any train of incidents in a drama which can be conceived as a separate whole. Thus a series of details bringing out the idea of a crime and its nemesis will constitute a Nemesis Action, an oracle and its fulfilment will make up an Oracular Action, a problem and its solution a Problem Action. Throughout the treatment of Plot the root idea of *pattern* should be steadily kept in mind: in the case of these Single Actions—the units of Plot—we have as it were the lines of a geometrical design, made up of their details as a geometrical line is made up of separate points. The *Form* of a dramatic action—the shape of the line, so to speak—will be that which gives the train of incidents its distinctiveness: the nemesis, the oracle, the problem. An action may get its distinctiveness from its tone as a Comic, a Tragic or a Humorous Action; or it may be a Character Action, when a series of details acquire a unity in bringing out the character of Hastings or Lady Macbeth; an action may be an Intrigue, or the Rise and Fall of a person, or simply a Story like the Caskets Story; it may be a Motive Action, bringing about, as it progresses, the general changes in the fortunes of the story; or it may be a Stationary Action that is kept entirely outside the dramatic movement. Finally, an action may combine several different forms at the same time, just as a geometrical line may be at once, say, an arch and a spiral. The action that traces Macbeth's career has been treated as exhibiting a triple form of Nemesis, Irony, and Oracular Action; further, it is a Tragic Action in tone, it is a Character Action in its contrast with the career of Lady Macbeth, and

Forms of Dramatic Action.

[1] I borrow these terms from an able article by Mr. F. Ryland on the *Morte d'Arthur* (in the *English Illustrated Magazine* for October, 1888). Mr. Ryland uses the term 'statical' somewhat differently.

it stands in the relation of Main Action to others in the play[1]. CH. XIX.

Complexity applied to Action: a distinction of Modern Drama.

Now what I have called Single Action constituted the whole conception of Plot in ancient Tragedy; in the Shakespearean Drama it exists only as a unit of Complex Action. The application of complexity to action is rendered particularly easy by the idea of pattern, patterns which appeal to the eye being more often made up of several lines crossing and interweaving than of single lines. Ancient tragedy clung to 'unity of action,' and excluded such matter as threatened to set up a second interest in a play. Modern Plot has a unity of a much more elaborate order, perhaps best expressed by the word *harmony*—a harmony of distinct actions, each of which has its separate unity. The illustration of harmony is suggestive. Just as in musical harmony each part is a melody of itself, though one of them leads and is *the* melody, so a modern plot draws together into a common system a Main Action and other inferior yet distinct actions. Moreover the step from melody alone to melody harmonised, or that from the single instruments of the ancient world to the combinations of a modern orchestra, marks just the difference between ancient and modern art which we find reflected in the different conception of Plot held by Sophocles and by Shakespeare. Shakespeare's plots are federations of plots: in his ordering of dramatic events we trace a common self-government made out of elements which have an independence of their own, and at the same time merge a part of their independence in common action.

[1] A Sub-Action is either an action distinctly subordinate to another action (*Merchant of Venice*), or of inferior importance in the general scheme of the play (*Love's Labour's Lost*); or it is so called because its course is confined to a part and not the whole of the movement (*Julius Cæsar*). See Tabular Analysis, pages 399–416.

CH. XIX.

Analysis of Action.

The foundation of critical treatment in the matter of Plot is the *Analysis* of Complex Action into its constituent Single[1] Actions. This is easy in such a play as *The Merchant of Venice*. Here two of the actions are stories, a form of unity readily grasped, and in this case the stories had an independent existence outside the play. These identified and separated, it is easy also to see that Jessica constitutes a fresh centre of interest around which other details gather themselves; that the incidents in which Launcelot and Gobbo are concerned are separable from these; while the matter of the rings constitutes a distinct episode of the Caskets Story: already the junction of so many separate stories in a common working gratifies our sense of design. In other plays where the elements are not stories the individuality of the Single Actions will not always be so positive: all would readily distinguish the Lear Main plot from the Underplot of Gloucester, but in the subdivision of these difference of opinion arises. In an Appendix I have suggested schemes of Analysis for each of the nine plays treated in this work: I may here add four remarks. (1) Any series of details which can be collected from various parts of a drama to make up a common interest may be recognised in Analysis as a separate action. It follows from this that there may be very different modes of dividing and arranging the elements of the same plot: such Analysis is not a matter in which we are to look for right or wrong, but simply for better or worse. No scheme will ever exhaust the wealth of design which reveals itself in a play of Shakespeare; and the value of Analysis as a critical process is not confined to the scheme it produces, but includes also the insight which the mere effort to analyse a drama gives into the harmony and connection of its parts. (2) The essence of Plot being design, that will be the best scheme of Analysis which best brings out the idea of symmetry and design. (3) Analysis must be exhaustive: every detail in

Canons of Analysis.

Analysis tentative, not positive.

Design as the test of Analysis.

Analysis exhaustive.

[1] See note on page 74.

the drama must find a place in some one of the actions. (4) The constituent actions will of course not be mutually exclusive, many details being common to several actions: these details are so many meeting-points, in which the lines of action cross one another.—With these sufficiently obvious principles I must leave the schemes of analysis in the Appendix to justify themselves.

The elementary actions not mutually exclusive.

In the process of analysis we are led to notice special forms of action: in particular, the *Enveloping Action*. This interesting element of Plot may be described as the fringe, or border, or frame, of a dramatic pattern. It appears when the personages and incidents which make up the essential interest of a play are more or less loosely involved with some interest more wide-reaching than their own, though more vaguely presented. It is seen in its simplest form where a story occupied with private personages connects itself at points with public history: homely life being thus wrapped round with life of the great world; fiction having reality given to it by its being set in a frame of accepted fact. We are familiar enough with it in prose fiction. Almost all the Waverley Novels have Enveloping Actions, Scott's regular plan being to entangle the fortunes of individuals, which are to be the main interest of the story, with public events which make known history. Thus in *Woodstock* a Cavalier maiden and her Puritan lover become, as the story proceeds, mixed up in incidents of the Commonwealth and Restoration; or again, the plot of *Redgauntlet*, which consists in the separate adventures of a pair of Scotch friends, is brought to an issue in a Jacobite rising in which both become involved. The Enveloping Action is a favourite element in Shakespeare's plots. In the former part of the book I have pointed out how the War of the Roses forms an Enveloping Action to *Richard III*; how its connection with the other actions is close enough for it to catch the common feature of Nemesis; and how it is marked

The Enveloping Action.

CH. XIX. with special clearness by the introduction of Queen Margaret and the Duchess of York to bring out its opposite sides. In *Macbeth* there is an Enveloping Action of the supernatural centring round the Witches: the human workings of the play seem to be wrapped in a deeper working out of destiny, with prophetic beings to keep it before us. More simply, the supernatural gives to *The Tempest* an Enveloping Action of Enchantment. *Julius Cæsar*, as a story of political conspiracy and political reaction, is furnished with a loose Enveloping Action in the passions of the Roman mob: this is a vague power outside recognised political forces, appearing at the beginning to mark that uncertainty in public life which can drive even good men to conspiracy, while from the turning-point it furnishes the force the explosion of which is made to secure the conspirators' downfall.

A typical example is to be found in *Lear*, all the more typical from the fact that it is by no means a prominent interest in the play. The Enveloping Action in this drama is the French War. The seeds of this war are sown in the opening incident, in which the French King receives his wife
i. i. 265. from Lear with scarcely veiled insult: it troubles Gloucester
i. ii. 23. in the next scene that France is 'in choler parted.' Then we get, in the second Act, a distant hint of rupture from
ii. ii. 172. the letter of Cordelia read by Kent in the stocks. In the other scenes of this Act the only political question is of
ii. i. 11. 'likely wars toward' between the English dukes; but at the beginning of the third Act Kent directly connects these quarrels of the dukes with the growing chance of a war with
iii. i. 19–34. France: the French have had intelligence of the 'scattered kingdom,' and have been 'wise in our negligence.' In this
iii. iii. Act Gloucester confides to Edmund the feeler he has received from France, and his trustfulness is the cause of his
iii. iii. 22. downfall; Edmund treacherously reveals the confidence to
iii. vi. 95–108. Cornwall, and makes it the occasion of his rise. Gloucester's measures for the safety of Lear have naturally a connection

with the expected invasion, and he sends him to Dover to find welcome and protection. The final scene of this Act, devoted to the cruel outrage on Gloucester, shows from its very commencement the important connection of the Enveloping Action with the rest of the play: the French army has landed, and it is this which is felt to make Lear's escape so important, and which causes such signal revenge to be taken on Gloucester. Throughout the fourth Act all the threads of interest are becoming connected with the invading army at Dover; if this Act has a separate interest of its own in Edmund's intrigues with both Goneril and Regan at once, yet these intrigues are possible only because Edmund is hurrying backwards and forwards between the princesses in the measures of military preparation for the battle. The fifth Act has its scene on the battlefield, and the double issue of the battle stamps itself on the whole issue of the play: the death of Lear and Cordelia is the result of the French defeat, while, on the other hand, all who were to reap the fruits of guilt die in the hour of victory. Thus this French War is a model of Enveloping Action:—outside the main issues, yet loosely connecting itself with every phase of the movement; originating in the incident which is the origin of the whole action; the possibility of it developed by the progress of the Main story, alike by the cruelty shown to Lear and by the rivalry between his daughters; the fear of it playing a main part in the tragic side of the Underplot, and the preparation for it serving as occasion for the remaining interest of intrigue; finally, breaking out as a reality in which the whole action of the play merges.

iii. vii. 2, &c.

iv. ii. 11, 15; iv. v. 12, 30, &c.

v. iii. 238, 256.

The Frame in As You Like It.

In no play is this device of the Enveloping Action carried so far as in *As You Like It.* The matter of this play analyses into two distinct systems of related actions[1]. One of these is a system of love stories developed and carried to a happy

[1] See Tabular Analysis, below, page 415.

CH. XIX.

conclusion in the Forest of Arden. But machinery has to be set in motion to bring the personages of these love stories into the forest world, where they are to meet and feel one another's influence: the portions of the whole play devoted to this purpose thus constitute a Frame in which the main interest is enclosed. But when this Frame comes to be itself analysed, it is found to be a system of four distinct Enveloping Actions, one inside another, like Chinese boxes. The outermost belongs to the widest world of politics, the Civil War of the Dukes, which has driven the good Duke into exile and so set up the outlaw life of Arden forest. One degree less wide than Civil War are the dissensions of great families, and the Feud in the De Boys family makes our second Enveloping Action. It appears to be loosely involved in the first, since the reigning Duke seems about to extend his protection to the oppressed Orlando, until he hears that he is the son of his enemy, and then not only Orlando has to fly, but the persecutor Oliver is made responsible for him and driven from his estate. These two Enveloping Actions are accountable for the Woodland Life in the forest of Arden, and the presence there of the lovers. But this Woodland Life itself makes another Enveloping Action, wrapping round all the incidents of the love plot with its pastoral spirit. And there is yet one more effect of the same kind; for this Woodland Life has (before the commencement of the main plot) attracted the morbid Jaques as a region favourable for moralising, and his humour of melancholy makes an atmosphere in which the lovers are to move and breathe. All this complex system is no more than a Frame to the love passages which make up the main plot. But a Frame that is so prominent will not unnaturally be allowed some share in the movement of the play, and we get a very striking bit of plot handling at the end. The marriage of Celia and Oliver terminates the Feud of the De Boys brothers, Oliver proposing to estate upon Orlando all his father's revenues. At the

i. ii, from 233.

v. ii. init.

marriage feast news comes of how the Duke, marching after Oliver's flight against the Forest of Arden and its inmates, had been smitten with penitence, and resigned his government to the rightful ruler. Accordingly the Woodland Life of the Arden outlaws ceases with the occasion that brought it into existence. And, for a final touch, Jaques finds no longer any attraction in his companions thus made happy, but goes to the more congenial region of the penitent 'convertite.' The consummation of the love plot is thus made coincident with the termination of the actions constituting the enclosing Frame, which thus seems to drop to pieces, like a scaffold which has served its purpose and been taken down. CH. XIX. v. iv. 186.

From Analysis we pass naturally to *Economy*. Considered in the abstract, as a phase of plot beauty, Economy may be defined as that perfection of design which lies midway between incompleteness and waste. Its formula is that a play must be seen to contain all the details necessary to the unity, no detail superfluous to the unity, and each detail expanded in exact proportion to its bearing on the unity. In practice, as a branch of treatment in Shakespeare-Criticism, Economy, like Analysis, deals with complexity of plot. The two are supplementary to one another. The one resolves a complexity into its elements, the other traces the unity running through these elements. Analysis distinguishes the separate actions which make up a plot, while Economy notes the various bonds between these actions and the way in which they are brought into a common system: it being clear that the more the separateness of the different interests can be reduced the richer will be the economy of design. *Economy: supplementary to Analysis.*

It will be enough to note three Economic Forms. The first is simple *Connection*: the actual contact of action with action, the separate lines of the pattern meeting at various points. In other words, the different actions have details or personages in common. Bassanio is clearly a *Economic Forms. Connection*

CH. XIX. bond between the two main stories of *The Merchant of Venice*, in both of which he figures so prominently; and it has been pointed out that the scene of Bassanio's successful choice is an incident with which all the stories which enter into the action of the play connect themselves. There are *Link Personages*, who have a special function so to connect stories, and similarly *Link Actions*: Gloucester in the play of *Lear* and the Jessica Story in *The Merchant of Venice* are examples. Or Connection may come by the interweaving of stories as they progress: they alternate, or fill, so to speak, each other's interstices. Where the Story of the Jew halts for a period of three months, the elopement of Jessica comes to occupy the interval; or again, scenes from the tragedy of the Gloucester family separate scenes from the tragedy of Lear, until the two tragedies have become mutually entangled. Envelopment too serves as a kind of Connection: the actions which make up such a play as *Richard III* gain additional compactness by their being merged in a common Enveloping Action.

and Linking.

from II. i. to III. ii. 319.

Dependence.

Another Form of Economy is *Dependence*. This term expresses the relation between an underplot and main plot, or between subactions and the actions to which they are subordinate. The fact that Gloucester is a follower of Lear—he would appear to have been his court chamberlain—makes the story of the Gloucester family seem to spring out of the story of the Lear family; that we are not called upon to initiate a fresh train of interest ministers to our sense of Economy. In *The Tempest*, where the action is mainly occupied with enchantment, it has been shown that the underplot assists this fundamental idea by bringing forward phases of actual life allied to enchantment. Here also the relation of the underplot to the mainplot may be described as dependence: the term fairly covers such constructive support, just as in architecture buttresses at once lean against and support the main mass.

compare I. i. 35, 191.

CH. XIX.

Symmetry: Balance,

But in the Shakespearean Drama the most important Economic Form is *Symmetry*: between different parts of a design symmetry is the closest of bonds. A simple form of Symmetry is the *Balance* of actions, by which, as it were, the mass of one story is made to counterpoise that of another. If the Caskets Story, moving so simply to its goal of success, seems over-weighted by the thrilling incidents of the Jew Story, we find that the former has by way of compensation the Episode of the Rings rising out of its close, while the elopement of Jessica and her reception at Belmont transfers a whole batch of interests from the Jew side of the play to the Christian side. Or again, in a play such as *Macbeth*, which traces the Rise and Fall of a personage, the Rise is accompanied by the separate interest of Banquo till he falls a victim to its success; to balance this we have in the Fall Macduff, who becomes important only after Banquo's death, and from that point occupies more and more of the field of view until he brings the action to a close. Similarly in *Julius Cæsar* the victim himself dominates the first half; Antony, his avenger, succeeds to his position for the second half.

Parallelism and Contrast.

More important than Balance as forms of Symmetry are *Parallelism* and *Contrast* of actions. Both are, to a certain extent, exemplified in the plot of *Macbeth*: the triple form of Nemesis, Irony, and Oracular binding together all the elements of the plot down to the Enveloping Action illustrates Parallelism, and Contrast has been shown to be a bond between the interest of Lady Macbeth and of her husband. But Parallelism and Contrast are united in their most typical forms in *Lear*, which is at once the most intricate and the most symmetrical of Shakespearean dramas. A glance at the scheme of this plot shows its deep-seated parallelism. A Main story in the family of Lear has an Underplot in the family of Gloucester. The Main plot is a problem and its solution, the Underplot is an intrigue and its nemesis. Each is a system of

CH. XIX.

four actions: there is the action initiating the problem with the three tragedies which make up its solution, there is again the action generating the intrigue and the three tragedies which constitute its nemesis. The threefold tragedy in the Main plot has its elements exactly analogous, each to each, to the threefold tragedy of the Underplot: Lear and Gloucester alike reap a double nemesis of evil from the children they have favoured, and good from the children they have wronged; the innocent Cordelia has to suffer like the innocent Edgar; alike in both stories the gains of the wicked are found to be the means of their destruction. Even in the subactions, which have only a temporary distinctness in carrying out such elaborate interworking, the same Parallelism manifests itself. They run in pairs: where Kent has an individual mission as an agency for good, Oswald runs a course parallel with him as an agency for evil; of the two heirs of Lear, Albany, after passively representing the good side of the Main plot, has the function of presiding over the nemesis which comes on the evil agents of the Underplot, while Cornwall, who is active in the evil of the Main plot, is the agent in bringing suffering on the good victims of the Underplot; once more from opposite sides of the Lear story Goneril and Regan work in parallel intrigues to their destruction. Every line of the pattern runs parallel to some distant line. Further, so fundamental is the symmetry that we have only to shift the point of view and the Parallelism becomes Contrast. If the family histories be arranged around Cordelia and Edmund, as centres of good and evil in their different spheres, we perceive a sharp antithesis between the two stories extending to every detail: though stated already in the chapter on *Lear*, I should like to state it again in parallel columns to do it full justice.

e.g. i. iv. 85–104; ii. ii, &c.

e.g. iv. ii. 29; v. iii, from 59.

iii. vii.

iv. ii; iv. v; v. iii. 238.

In the MAIN PLOT a	In the UNDERPLOT a
Daughter,	Son,
Who has received nothing but Harm from her father,	Who has received nothing but Good from his father,
Who has had her position unjustly torn from her and given to her undeserving elder Sisters,	Who has, contrary to justice, been advanced to the position of an innocent elder Brother he had maligned,
Nevertheless sacrifices herself to save the Father who *did* the injury from the Sisters who *profited by* it.	Nevertheless is seeking the destruction of the Father who *did* him the unjust kindness, when he falls by the hand of the Brother who *was wronged* by it.

The play of Lear is itself sufficient to suggest to the critic that in the analysis of Shakespeare's plots he may safely expect to find symmetry in proportion to their intricacy.

XX.

Interest of Plot: Dynamics.

Chap. XX.

Movement applied to Plot.

WE now reach the Dynamics of Plot: the important department of dramatic interest which comprehends the effects dependent upon the actual progress of the story, as distinguished from those which imply the selection and comparison of its various parts. This interest of Movement falls under two heads—*Motive Form* and *Motive Force.* The first is made by a succession of incidents acting upon our sense of design. But motion implies force: and the second type of interest is in watching the underlying causes or principles which the current of incidents reveals. The first addresses itself to our sense of symmetry, the second to our sense of economy. They will be considered separately.

Motive Form.

Simple Movement: the Line of Action a straight line.

Complicated Movement: the Line of Action a curve.

Motive Form is the impression of design left by the succession of incidents in the order in which they actually stand. The succession of incidents may suggest progress to a goal, as in the Caskets Story. This is Simple[1] Movement: the Line of Action becomes a straight line. We get the next step by the variation that is made when a curved line is substituted for a straight line: in other words, when the succession of incidents reaches its goal, but only after a diversion. This in its most prominent form is what is known as *Complication and Resolution.* A train of events is obstructed and diverted from what appears its natural course, which gives the interest of Complication: after a time the obstruction is removed and the natural course is restored,

[1] See note on page 74.

which is the Resolution of the action: the Complication, like a musical discord, having existed only for the sake of being resolved. No clearer example could be desired than that of Antonio, whose career when we are introduced to it appears to be that of leading the money-market of Venice and extending patronage and protection all around; by the entanglement of the bond this career is checked and Antonio turned into a prisoner and bankrupt; then Portia cuts the knot and Antonio becomes all he has been before. Or again, the affianced intercourse of Portia and Bassanio begins with an exchange of rings; by the cross circumstances connected with Antonio's trial one of them parts with this token, and the result is a comic interruption to the smoothness of lovers' life, until by Portia's confession of the ruse the old footing is restored.

iii. ii. 173. iv. ii. v. i. 266.

Action-Movement distinguished from Passion-Movement.

Complicated Movement as so stated belongs to the Action side of dramatic effect. It rests upon design and the interworking of details; its interest lies in obstacles interposed to be removed, doing for the sake of undoing, entanglement for its own sake; in its total effect it ministers to a sense of intellectual satisfaction, like that belonging to a musical fugue, in which every opening suggested has been sufficiently followed up. We get a movement which is at once different, and yet a counterpart, when the sense of design is inseparable from effects of passion, and the movement is, as it were, traced in our emotional nature. In this case a growing strain is put upon our sympathy which is not unlike Complication. But no Resolution follows: the rise is made to end in fall, the progress leads to ruin; in place of the satisfaction that comes from restoring and unloosing is substituted a fresh appeal to our emotional nature, and from agitation we pass only to the calmer emotions of pity and awe. There is thus a *Passion-Movement* distinct from *Action-Movement*; and, analogous to the Complication and Resolution of the latter, Passion-Movement has its *Strain and Reaction.* The

CHAP. XX. Line of Passion has its various forms. A chapter has been devoted to illustrating one form of Passion-Movement, which may be called the *Regular Arch*—if we may found a technical term on the happy illustration of Gervinus. The example was taken from the play of *Julius Cæsar*, the emotional effect in which was shown to pass from calm interest to greater and greater degree of agitation, until after culminating in the centre it softens down and yields to the different calmness of pity and acquiescence. The movement of *Richard III*, *Othello*, and many other dramas more resembles the form of an *Inclined Plane*, the turn in the emotion occurring long past the centre of the play. Or again, there is the *Wave Line* of emotional distribution, made by repeated alternations of strain and relief. This is a form of Passion-Movement that nearly approaches Action-Movement, and readily goes with it in the same play; in *The Merchant of Venice* the union of the two stories gives such alternate Strain and Relief, and the Episode of the Rings comes as final Relief to the final Strain of the trial.

The Line of Passion a Regular Arch,

an Inclined Plane

Iv. ii. 46.

or a Wave Line.

The distinction between Action-Movement and Passion-Movement is of special importance in Shakespeare-Criticism, inasmuch as it is the real basis of distinction between the two main classes of Shakespearean dramas. Every one feels that the terms Comedy and Tragedy are inadequate, and indeed absurd, when applied to Shakespeare. The distinction these terms express is one of Tone, and they were quite in place in the Ancient Drama, in which the comic and tragic tones were kept rigidly distinct and were not allowed to mingle in the same play. Applied to a branch of Drama of which the leading characteristic is the complete Mixture of Tones the terms necessarily break down, and the so-called 'Comedies' of *The Merchant of Venice* and *Measure for Measure* contain some of the most tragic effects in Shakespeare. The true distinction between the two kinds of plays is one of Movement, not Tone. In *The Merchant*

For 'Comedy,' 'Tragedy,' substitute, in the case of Shakespeare,

of Venice the leading interest is in the complication of Antonio's fortunes and its resolution by the device of Portia. In all such cases, however perplexing the entanglement of the complication may have become, the ultimate effect of the whole lies in the resolution of this complication; and this is an intellectual effect of satisfaction. In the plays called Tragedies there is no such return from distraction to recovery: our sympathy having been worked up to the emotion of agitation is relieved only by the emotion of pathos or despair. Thus in these two kinds of dramas the impression which to the spectator overpowers all other impressions, and gives individuality to the particular play, is this sense of intellectual or of emotional unity in the movement: is, in other words, Action-Movement or Passion-Movement. The two may be united, as remarked above in the case of *The Merchant of Venice*; but one or the other will be predominant and will give to the play its unity of impression. The distinction, then, which the terms Comedy and Tragedy fail to mark would be accurately brought out by substituting for them the terms Action-Drama and Passion-Drama.

'Action-Drama,' 'Passion-Drama.'

With complexity of action comes complexity of movement. *Compound Movement* takes in the idea of the relative motion amongst the different actions into which a plot can be analysed. A play of Shakespeare may present a system of wheels within wheels, like a solar system in motion as a whole while the separate members of it have their own orbits to follow. The nature of Compound Movement can be most simply brought out by describing its three leading Modes of Motion. In *Similar Motion* the actions of a system are moving in the same form. The plot of *Richard III*, for example, is a general rise and fall of Nemesis made up of elements which are themselves rising and falling Nemeses. Such Similar Motion is only Parallelism looked at from the side of movement. A variation of it occurs when the form

Compound Movement.

Its three Modes of Motion: Similar Motion,

CHAP. XX.

of one action is distributed amongst the rest: the main action of *Julius Cæsar* is a Nemesis Action, the two sub-actions are the separate interests of Cæsar and Antony, which put together amount to Nemesis.

Contrary Motion: Counter-Action,

Of *Contrary Motion* the simplest form is Counter-Action: where (as in *The Tempest*) an intrigue which serves as the original Complicating Action of the play has pitted against it a Resolving Action which undoes it. The difference between Contrary and Similar Motion is well illustrated in this play[1]. Its scheme involves three systems of Actions: a Main Plot, an Underplot, and a crowd of Mechanical Personages, who faintly reflect the general movement of the play. These three systems move in Similar Motion, all being included in a common complication and resolution. But the separate Actions of which each system is made up move in directions contrary from one another. The Complicating Action of the Main Plot has for Sub-Action an intrigue which is met by a like Sub-Action attached to the Resolving Action: these two Sub-Actions counteract one another. The Resolving Action of the Main Plot has two Sub-Actions, outside the scenic unity, and serving as preparation for the main movement. One of them is Prospero's judgment on Caliban, which prepares for that amount of further complication which is usually the task of a Resolving Action before it proceeds to resolve; the other, the work of mercy done to Ariel, prepares for the resolving side of Prospero's task: thus this pair of Sub-Actions also move in opposition to one another as Judgment and Mercy. Again, of the two Link Actions which constitute the Underplot one, the story of Ferdinand and Miranda, moves in the direction of their ultimate union; the other, the conspiracy of Caliban and the sailors, tends towards their ultimate separation, Caliban awaking in the universal restoration to the deception under which he has laboured:

[1] See Tabular Analysis, pages 411–2.

What a thrice-double ass
Was I, to take this drunkard for a god
And worship this dull fool! v. i. 294.

Even amongst the Mechanical Personages the group of Sailors and the group of Courtiers, so far as they have any share in the action of the play, seem to move in an opposition reflected in the humorous antagonism of their leaders, the Boatswain and Gonzalo, who are sparring with one another at the point of death, and resume their sparring as soon as they meet in the final enchantment. The whole play is a beautiful study for complexity of dramatic movement, exhibiting three systems of Actions moving together in Similar Motion, while the individual Actions of which each system is made up move forward in mutual antagonism. i. i. and v. i. 217.

Another variety of Contrary Motion is Interference, when the separate actions as they move on interfere with one another; as the Touchstone Action, or the Jaques Action, in *As You Like It*, with their professional or morbid humour, is continually clashing with the Main Action of Rosalind and Orlando, which is animated throughout by genuine humour. A more pronounced form of Interference between actions is where each acts as complicating force to the other, turning it out of its course; in reality they are helping one another's advance, seeing that complication is a step in dramatic progress. *The Merchant of Venice* furnishes an example. The Caskets Story progresses without check to its climax; in starting it complicates the Jew action—for before Bassanio can get to Belmont he borrows of Antonio the loan which is to entangle him in the meshes of the Jew's revenge; then the Caskets Story as a result of its climax resolves this complication in the Story of the Jew—for the union of Portia with Bassanio provides the deliverer for Bassanio's friend. But in thus resolving the Story of the Jew the Caskets Story, in the new phase of it that has commenced *Interference.*

CHAP. XX. with the exchange of betrothal rings, itself suffers complication—the circumstances of the trial offering the suggestion to Portia to make the demand for Bassanio's ring. Thus of the two actions moving on side by side the one interferes with and diverts the other from its course, and again in restoring it gets itself diverted. This mutual interference makes up Contrary Motion.

Convergent Motion. A third mode of Compound Movement is *Convergent Motion*, by which actions, or systems of actions, at first separate, become drawn together as they move on, and assist one another's progress. This has been described at length in the chapter on *Othello*. The play of *Lear* again furnishes a typical example. This play, it will be recollected, includes two distinct systems of actions tracing the story of two separate families. Moreover the main story after its opening incident presents, so far as movement is concerned, three different sides, according as its incidents centre around Lear, Goneril, or Regan. The first link between these diverse actions is Gloucester, the central personage of the whole plot. Gloucester has been the King's chamberlain and his close friend, the King having been godfather to his son. Accordingly, in the highly unstable political condition of a kingdom divided equally between two unprincipled sisters, Gloucester represents a third party, the party of Lear: he holds the balance of power, and the effort to secure him draws the separate interests together. Thus as soon as Lear and Goneril have quarrelled Lear sends Kent to Gloucester, and our actions begin to approach one another. Before this messenger can arrive we hear of 'hints and ear-kissing arguments' as to rupture between the dukes, and we see Regan and her husband making a hasty journey—'out of season threading dark-eyed night'—in order to be the first at Gloucester's castle; when Goneril in self-defence follows all the separate elements of the main plot have found a meeting-point. But this castle of Gloucester in

I. i. 35, 191. II. i. 93. I. v. 1. II. i. 9. II. i. 121. II. iv. 192.

which they meet is the seat of the underplot, and the two systems become united in the closest manner by this central linking. Regan arrives in time to use her authority in furthering the intrigue against Edgar as a means of recommending herself to the deceived Gloucester; the other intrigue of the underplot, that against Gloucester himself, is promoted by the same means when Edmund has betrayed to Regan his father's protection of Lear; while the meeting of both sisters with Edmund lays the foundation of the mutual intriguing which forms the further interest of the entanglement between underplot and main story. All the separate lines of action have thus moved to a common centre, and their concentration in a common focus gives opportunity for the climax of passion which forms the centre-piece of the play. Then the Enveloping Action comes in as a further binding force, and it has been pointed out above how throughout the fourth and fifth Acts all the separate actions, whatever their immediate purpose, have an ultimate reference to Dover as the landing-place of the invading army: in military phrase Dover is the common *objective* on which all the separate trains of interest are concentrating. In this way have the actions of this intricate plot, so numerous and so separate at first, been found to converge to a common centre and then move together to a common *dénouement*.

ii. i. 88–131, esp. 112.

iii. v, &c.

The distinction of movement from the other elements of Plot leads also to the question of *Turning-points*, an idea equally connected with movement and with design. In the movement of every play a Turning-point is implied: movement could not have dramatic interest unless there were a change in the direction of events, and such change implies a point at which the change becomes apparent. Changes of a kind may be frequent through the progress of a play, but one notable point will stand out at which the ultimate issues present themselves as decided, the line of action changing

Turning-points.

CHAP. XX.

The Catastrophe: or Focus of Movement.

The Centre of Plot.

from complication to resolution, the line of passion from strain to reaction. Such a point is technically a *Catastrophe*: a word whose etymological meaning suggests a turning round so as to come down. In Shakespeare's dramatic practice we find a not less important Turning-point in relation to the design of the plot. That is at the exact centre[1]—the middle of the middle Act—and serves as a balancing point about which the plot may be seen to be symmetrical: it is a *Centre of Plot* as the Catastrophe is a *Focus of Movement*. The Catastrophe of *The Merchant of* iv. i. 305. *Venice* is clearly Portia's judgment in the Trial Scene, by which in a moment the whole entanglement is resolved. In an earlier chapter it has been pointed out how the union of iii. ii. Portia and Bassanio—at the exact centre of the play—is the real determinant of the whole plot, uniting the complicating and resolving forces, and constituting a scene in which all the four stories find a meeting-point. In *Richard III*, while iv. ii. 45. the Catastrophe comes in the hero's late recognition of his own nemesis, yet there has been, before this and in the exact centre, a turn in the Enveloping Action, which in- iii. iii. 15. cludes all the rest, shown by the recognition that Margaret's curses have now begun to be fulfilled. The exact centre of iii. iv. 20. *Macbeth*, as pointed out above, marks the hero's passage from rise to fall, that is from unbroken success to unbroken iii. iv. 49; v. viii. 13. failure: the corresponding Catastrophe in this play is double,

[1] The play of *Love's Labour's Lost* is only an apparent exception. For some reason I do not understand the numbering of the scenes is exceptional in this play: the second and third acts are very short, and the fifth act includes nearly half the play (ten twenty-fifths). Measured by lines the centre of the play falls within iv. iii: and this is obviously the Centre of Plot. In some plays the centring of the plot seems to be distributed evenly through the scenes of the middle Act. In *The Tempest*, for example, the different Actions reach their full complexity in the successive scenes of the third Act; in scene i, the Ferdinand and Miranda Action; in scene ii, the Caliban and Stephano Action; in scene iii, the Main Plot (including the Motive Sub-Actions: compare lines 10–17).

a first appearance of Nemesis in Banquo's ghost, its final stroke in the revelation of Macduff's secret of birth. *Julius Cæsar* presents the interesting feature of the Catastrophe and Central Turning-point exactly coinciding, in the triumphant appeal of the conspirators to future history. A Centre of Plot and a Catastrophe have already been pointed out in *Othello*[1]. In *As You Like It* Orlando meets the disguised Rosalind for the first time in the central scene; the dropping of the disguise in the fifth act makes a Catastrophe. *Lear*, according to the scheme of analysis suggested in this work, has its Catastrophe at the close of the initial scene, by which time the problem in experience has been set up in action, and the tragedies arising out of it thenceforward work on without break to its solution. A Centre of Plot is found for this play where, in the middle Scene of the middle Act, the third of the three forms of madness is brought into contact with the other two and makes the climax of passion complete. This regular union by Shakespeare of a marked catastrophe, appealing to every spectator, with a subtle dividing-point, interesting to the intellectual sense of analysis, illustrates the combination of force with symmetry, which is the genius of the Shakespearean Drama: it throughout presents a body of warm human interest governed by a mind of intricate design.

CHAP. XX.

III. i. 122.

III. iv. 45.

Further Resolution.

It may be added that in plots where the Enveloping Action is prominent Shakespeare usually gives a Further Resolution, after the action of the play itself has been regularly wound up; and a Further Resolution implies a third Turning-Point. The most marked case is *Love's Labour's Lost*, where, after the Complication set up by the French Princess's visit has worked itself out to complete Resolution, a shock is given by the news of the king of France's death, and a Further Resolution of the action takes place which converts comic

V. ii. 723.

[1] See above, page 240. Compare in all cases the Tabular Analysis on pages 399–416.

CHAP. XX. into serious. So (as pointed out above) when the plot of *As You Like It* has been wound up in a quadruple marriage, the entrance of Jaques de Boys with his news makes a fresh Turning-point, which has the effect of dissipating the Frame Actions that have held the play together. And in *The Tempest*, where the Enveloping Action is Enchantment, Prospero after bringing the plot to a complete consummation makes a Further Resolution by laying his Enchantment down.

v. iv. 157.

compare v. i. 50 with Epilogue.

Motive Force.

From Motive Form we pass to Motive Force. In fiction, just as much as in real life, the course of events is perpetually suggesting to us underlying causes or controlling forces,—whether these be Law, or some higher Will, or Chance; or, at the very least, the particular succession of incidents finds explanation in their combining to advance some common purpose. What are the purposes, or underlying principles, or technically, Motives, which thus carry forward the movement of the Shakespearean drama?

Providence as a Dramatic Motive.

To begin with, Providence is itself a Motive Force in fiction, the analyst finding the same interest in tracing meaning and design in the action of a story that the thinker finds in discovering a Moral Providence in the issues of real life. It has been argued in a previous chapter that, to understand the term Dramatic Providence aright, it is necessary to recognise how all principles which the thinker sees in the actual universe, alike those which assist and those which disturb our notions of moral order, have a right to a place in the dramatic picture of the world. One of the plays reviewed stands alone in relation to this topic: *The Tempest* is a study of Personal Providence. By a device not uncommon in prose fiction[1] we are in this play enabled to see an individual

[1] The most familiar example is *The Count of Monte-Cristo*, by Alexander Dumas. The plot of this novel brings its hero, by a con-

will elevated into a controlling destiny. Enchantment is, within its circle and during the influence of its auspicious star, equivalent to omnipotence; by such omnipotence of enchantment Prospero knows all that happens in his island, and irresistibly controls the issues of all events: the dramatist, by keeping us in continuous sympathy with Prospero, is working out for our benefit a conception of Personal Providence. But this is necessarily an exceptional case; in the great mass of plays the matter is confined to the experience of ordinary life, nor will the action be allowed to display the ruling mind of the universe to any greater degree than it presents itself in the actual thinking of mankind. In general, then, the Motive Forces handled by the dramatist will be such as he can artistically associate with the course of events in real life.

Poetic Justice a form of art.

One of the great determinants of fate in the Drama is *Poetic Justice.* What exactly is the meaning of this term? It is often understood to mean the correction of justice, as if justice in poetry were more just than the justice of real life. But this is not supported by the facts of dramatic story. An English judge and jury would revolt against measuring out to *beauty.*

currence of extraordinary circumstances, consisting partly in personal discipline, and partly in vast accessions of wealth and social power, into the position of an Earthly Providence to the world of the French capital, enabling him to execute irresistible designs on his friends and foes. A more direct treatment still is Eugene Sue's *Mysteries of Paris.* Here we have a hero actuated, not by sense of wrong, as in *Monte-Cristo,* but by pure benevolence, raising himself into a providential director of circumstances; and he incites others to do the same. But the most interesting variation of the theme is *The Wandering Jew* of the same author. In this work a family, distinguished by a vast inheritance that is to descend to the surviving members after generations of accumulation, are displayed as placed between *two* opposing Earthly Providences: the Jesuits (who, as a society, never die) are treated by the author as a malignant Providence, seeking through a series of criminal intrigues to secure the treasure for themselves; while the 'Wandering Jew' and his sister (cursed, according to the legend, with immortality on earth, but repentant) counteract these machinations.

CHAP. XX.

Shylock the justice that is meted to him by the court of Venice, though the same persons beholding the scene in a theatre might feel their sense of Poetic Justice satisfied; unless indeed, which might easily happen, the confusion of ideas suggested by this term operated to check their acquiescence in the issue of the play. A better notion of Poetic Justice is to understand it as the modification of justice by considerations of art. This holds good even where justice and retribution do determine the fate of individuals in the Drama; in these cases our dramatic satisfaction still rests, not on the high degree of justice exhibited, but on the artistic mode in which it works. A policeman catching a thief with his hand in a neighbour's pocket and bringing him to summary punishment affords an example of complete justice, yet its very success robs it of all poetic qualities; the same thief defeating all the natural machinery of the law, yet overtaken after all by a questionable ruse, would be to the poetic sense far more interesting.

Nemesis as a dramatic motive.

Treating Poetic Justice, then, as the application of art to morals, its most important phase will be *Nemesis*, which we have already seen involves an artistic link between sin and retribution. The artistic connection may be of the most varied description. There is a Nemesis of perfect equality, Shylock reaping measure for measure as he has sown. When Nemesis overtook the Roman conspirators it was partly its suddenness that made it impressive: within fifty lines of their appeal to all time they have fallen into an attitude of deprecation. For Richard, on the contrary, retribution was delayed to the last moment: to have escaped to the eleventh hour is shown to be no security.

Varieties of Nemesis.

compare iii. i. 118 and 165.

> Jove strikes the Titans down
> Not when they first begin their mountain piling,
> But when another rock would crown their work.

Nemesis may be emphasised by repetition and multiplication; in the world in which Richard is plunged there appears to be

no event which is not a nemesis. Or the point may be the unlooked-for source from which the nemesis comes; as when upon the murder of Cæsar a colossus of energy and resource starts up in the time-serving and frivolous Antony, whom the conspirators had spared for his insignificance. Or again, ii. i. 165. retribution may be made bitter to the sinner by his tracing in it his own act and deed: from Lear himself, and from no other source, Goneril and Regan have received the power they use to crush his spirit. Nay, the very prize for which the sinner has sinned turns out in some cases the nemesis fate has provided for him; as when Goneril and Regan use their ill-gotten power for the state intrigues which work their iii. iii. 53-death. In the great crisis of *The Tempest* the whole universe 82. seems to resolve itself into nemesis upon a single crime. And most keenly pointed of all comes the nemesis that is combined with mockery: Macbeth, if he had not essayed the murder of Banquo as an *extra* precaution, might have iii. i. 49. enjoyed his stolen crown in safety; his expedition against Macduff's castle slays all *except* the fate-appointed avenger; iv. iii. 219. Richard disposes of his enemies with flawless success until *the last*, Dorset, escapes to his rival. iv. ii. 46.

Such is Nemesis, and such are some of the modes in which the connection between sin and retribution may be made artistically impressive. Poetic Justice, however, is a wider term than Nemesis. The latter implies some offence, as an occasion for the operation of judicial machinery. But, apart from sin, fate may be out of accord with character, and the correction of this ill distribution will satisfy the dramatic sense. But here again the practice of dramatic providence appears regulated, not with a view to abstract justice, but to justice modified by dramatic sympathy: Poetic Justice extends to the exhibition of fate moving in the interests of those with whom we sympathise and to the confusion of those with whom we are in antagonism. This gives point, we have seen, to the episode of Ferdinand and Miranda in *The*

Poetic Justice other than Nemesis.

CHAP. XX. *Tempest.* Again, viewed as a piece of equity the sentence on Shylock—a plaintiff who has lost his suit by an accident of statute-law—seems highly questionable. On the other hand, this sentence brings a fortune to a girl who has won our sympathies in spite of her faults; it makes provision for those for whom there is a dramatic necessity of providing; above all it is in accord with our secret liking that good fortune should go with the bright and happy, and sever itself from the mean and sordid. Whether this last is justice, I will not discuss: it is enough that it is one of the instincts of the imagination, and in creative literature justice must pay tribute to art.

iv. i. 346–363.

Pathos as a dramatic motive.

But however widely the term be stretched, justice is only one of the determinants of fate in the Drama, and perhaps this principle is never more clearly seen than in *Love's Labour's Lost*, where, as has been pointed out [1], the fortune of the various personages is determined for better or worse simply according to the sense of humour which each possesses. Confusion on this point has led to many errors of criticism. The case of Cordelia is in point. Because she is involved in the ruin of Lear it is felt by some commentators that a consideration of justice must be sought to explain her death: they find it perhaps in her original resistance to her father; or the ingenious suggestion has been made that Cordelia, in her measures to save her father, invades England, and this breach of patriotism needs atonement. But this is surely twisting the story to an explanation, not extracting an explanation from the details of the story. It would be a violation of all dramatic proportion, needing the strongest evidence from the details of the play, if Cordelia's 'most small fault' betrayed her to dramatic execution. And as to the sin against patriotism, the whole notion of it is foreign to the play itself, in which the truest patriots, such as Kent and Gloucester,

iv. iv. 27. ii. ii. 170–177*; iii. i, v.

[1] See above, page 291.

* The text in this passage is regarded as difficult by many editors, and

are secretly confederate with Cordelia and look upon her as the hope of their unhappy country; while even Albany himself, however necessary he finds it to repel the invader, yet distinctly feels that justice is on the other side. The fact is that in Cordelia's case, as in countless other cases, motives determine fate which have in them no relation to justice; fiction being in this matter in harmony with real life, where in only a minority of instances can we recognise any element of justice or injustice as entering into the fates of individuals. When in real life a little child dies, what consideration of justice is there that bears on such an experience? Nevertheless there is an irresistible sense of beauty in the idea of the fleeting child-life arrested while yet in its completeness, before the rude hand of time has begun to trace lines of passion or hardness; the parent indeed may not feel this in the case of his own child, but in art, where there is no mist of individual

iv. ii. 2–10 (compare 55, 95); v. i. 21–27.

is marked in the Globe Edition as corrupt. I do not see the difficulty of taking it as it stands, if regard be had to the general situation, in which (as Steevens has pointed out) Kent is reading the letter in disjointed snatches by the dim moonlight. Commentators seem to me to have increased the obscurity by taking 'enormous' in its rare sense of 'irregular,' 'out of order,' and making it refer to the state of England. Surely it is used in its ordinary meaning, and applies to France; the clause in which it occurs being part of the *actual words* of Cordelia's letter, who naturally uses 'this' of the country from which she writes. Inverted commas would make the connection clear.

> Approach, thou beacon to this under globe,
> That by thy comfortable beams I may
> Peruse this letter!—'Nothing almost sees miracles'—
> 'But misery'—I know 'tis from Cordelia,
> Who hath 'most fortunately been inform'd'
> Of my 'obscured course, and shall find time
> From this enormous state'—'seeking to give
> Losses their remedies,' &c.

I. e. Cordelia promises she will find leisure from the oppressive cares of her new kingdom to remedy the evils of England. Kent gives up the attempt to read; but enough has been brought out for the dramatist's purpose at that particular stage, viz. to hint that Kent was in correspondence with Cordelia, and looked to her as the deliverer of England.

CHAP. XX. feeling to blind, the sense of beauty comes out stronger than the sense of loss. It is the mission of the Drama thus to interpret the beauty of fate: it seeks, as Aristotle puts it, to purify our emotions by healthy exercise. The Drama does with human experience what Painting does with external nature. There are landscapes whose beauty is obvious to all; but it is one of the privileges of the artist to reveal the charm that lies in the most ordinary scenery, until the ideal can be recognised everywhere, and nature itself becomes art. Similarly there are striking points in life, such as the vindication of justice, which all can catch: but it is for the dramatist, as the artist in life, to arrange the experience he depicts so as to bring out the hidden beauties of fate, until the trained eye sees a meaning in all that happens;—until indeed the word 'suffering' itself has only to be translated into its Greek equivalent, and *pathos* is recognised as a form of beauty. Accumulation of Pathos then must be added to Poetic Justice as a determinant of fate in the Drama. And our sensitiveness to this form of beauty is nowhere more signally satisfied than when we see Cordelia dead in the arms of Lear: fate having mysteriously seconded her self-devotion, and nothing, not even her life, being left out to make her sacrifice complete.

As the Accumulation of Pathos is a determining purpose in one class of dramas, so for plays of the opposite type a leading motive is the Accumulation of Humour. *Love's Labour's Lost* is a clear example, the plot of which has been seen to be a contrivance for bringing together two opposites, the conflict of which will continually explode in humour. In Comedy generally Fun plays the part of Fate.

The Supernatural as a dramatic motive.

There remains a third great determinant of fate in the Drama—the Supernatural. Here, as in the discussion of Dramatic Providence, *The Tempest* must be placed in a category by itself: where the whole story is elevated out of the natural into the region of enchantment the Supernatural may

be said to vanish[1]. The supernatural element that can be treated as a dramatic motive must be one that interferes in a world of reality. I have in a former chapter pointed out how in relation to this topic the modern Drama stands in a different position from that of ancient Tragedy. In the Drama of antiquity the leading motive forces were supernatural, either the secret force of Destiny, or the interposition of supernatural beings who directly interfered with human events. We are separated from this view of life by a revolution of thought which has substituted Providence for Destiny as the controller of the universe, and absorbed the supernatural within the domain of Law. Yet elements that had once entered so deeply into the Drama would not be easily lost to the machinery of Passion-Movement; supernatural agency has a degree of recognition in modern thought, and even Destiny may still be utilised if it can be stripped of antagonism to the idea of a benevolent Providence. To begin with the latter: the problem for a modern dramatist is to reconcile Destiny with Law. The characteristics which made the ancient conception of fate dramatically impressive—its irresistibility, its unintelligibility, and its suggestion of personal hostility—he may still insinuate into the working of events: only the destiny must be rationalised, that is, the course of events must at the same time be explicable by natural causes.

The Supernatural rationalised in modern Drama:

First: Shakespeare gives us Destiny acting objectively, as an external force, in the form of *Irony*, already discussed in connection with the standard illustration of it in *Macbeth*. In the movement of this play Destiny appears in the most pronounced form of mockery: every difficulty and check being in the issue converted into an instrument for furthering

As an objective force in Irony;

[1] Even in this case the principle that distinguishes the action of enchantment in *The Tempest* agrees with that laid down in the text for Shakespeare's general treatment:—the supernatural intensifies, rather than determines, human action, leading Antonio and Sebastian along a path chosen by themselves, and bringing repentance only to those to whom before repentance was possible. [Above, pages 273, 278.]

CHAP. XX. the course of events. Yet this mockery is wholly without any suggestion of malignity in the governing power of the universe; its effect being rather to measure the irresistibility of righteous retribution. This Irony makes just the difference between the ordinary operations of Law or Providence and the suggestion of Destiny: yet each step in the action is sufficiently explained by rational considerations. What more
i. iv. 37. natural than that Duncan should proclaim his son heir-apparent to check any hopes which too successful service might excite? Yet what more natural than that this loss of
i. iv. 48. Macbeth's remote chance of the crown should be the occasion of his resolve no longer to be content with chances?
ii. iii. 141. What more natural than that the sons of the murdered king should take flight upon the revelation of a treason useless to its perpetrator as long as they were living? Yet what again more natural than that the momentary reaction consequent
ii. iv. 21–41. upon this flight should, in the general fog of suspicion and terror, give opportunity to the object of universal dread himself to take the reins of government? The Irony is throughout no more than a garb worn by rational history[1].

As a subjective force in Infatuation. Or, again, Destiny may be exhibited as a subjective force in *Infatuation* or *Judicial Blindness*: 'whom the gods would destroy they first blind.' This was a conception specially impressive to ancient ethics; the lesson it gathered from almost every great fall was that of a spiritual darkening which hid from the sinner his own danger, obvious to every other eye, till he had been tempted beyond the possibility of retreat.

> Falling in frenzied guilt, he knows it not;
> So thick the blinding cloud
> That o'er him floats; and Rumour widely spread
> With many a sigh repeats the dreary doom,
> A mist that o'er the house
> In gathering darkness broods.

[1] In comic stories the Irony of Circumstances is a counterpart to the tragic Irony of Fate. Rosalind's disguise converts the principal scenes of *As You Like It* into a prolonged Irony.

Such Infatuation is very far from being inconsistent with the idea of Law; indeed, it appears repeatedly in the strong figures of Scriptural speech, by which the ripening of sin to its own destruction—a merciful law of a righteously-ordered universe—is suggested as the direct act of Him who is the founder of the universe and its laws. By such figures God is represented as hardening Pharaoh's heart; or, again, an almost technical description of Infatuation is put by the fervour of prophecy into the mouth of God:— CHAP. XX.

> Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

In the case of Macbeth the judicial blindness is maintained to the last moment, and he pauses in the final combat to taunt Macduff with certain destruction. Yet, while we thus get the full dramatic effect of Infatuation, it is so far rationalised that we are allowed to see the machinery by which the Infatuation has been brought about: we have heard the Witches arrange to deceive Macbeth with false oracles. A very dramatic, but wholly natural, example of Infatuation appears at the turning-point of Richard's career, where, when he has just discovered that Richmond is the point from which the storm of Nemesis threatens to break upon him, prophecies throng upon his memory which might have all his life warned him of this issue, had he not been blind to them till this moment. Again, Antonio's challenge to Shylock to do his worst is, as I have already pointed out, an outburst of *hybris*, the insolence of Infatuation: but this is no more than a natural outcome of a conflict between two implacable temperaments. In Infatuation, then, as in all its other forms, Destiny is exhibited by Shakespeare as harmonised with natural law.

v. viii. 13. iii. v. 16. iv. ii. 98, &c. i. iii. 131.

Besides Destiny the Shakespearean Drama admits direct supernatural agencies—witches, ghosts, apparitions, as well as portents and violations of natural law. It appears to

Supernatural agencies:

CHAP. XX. me idle to contend that these in Shakespeare are not really supernatural, but must be interpreted as delusions of their victims. There may be single cases, such as the appearance of Banquo to Macbeth, where, as no eye sees it but his own, the apparition may be resolved into an hallucination. But to determine Shakespeare's general practice it is enough to point to the Ghost in *Hamlet*, which, as seen by three persons at once and on separate occasions, is indisputably objective: and a single instance is sufficient to establish the assumption in the Shakespearean Drama of supernatural beings with a real existence. Zeal for Shakespeare's rationality is a main source of the opposite view; but for the assumption of such supernatural existences the responsibility lies not with Shakespeare, but with the opinion of the age he is pourtraying. A more important question is how far Shakespeare uses such supernatural agency as a motive force in his plays; how far does he allow it to enter into the working of events, for the interpretation of which he is responsible? On this point Shakespeare's usage is clear and subtle: he uses the agency of the supernatural to intensify and to illuminate human action, not to determine it.

Intensifying human action;

Supernatural agency intensifying human action is illustrated in *Macbeth*. No one can seriously doubt the objective existence of the Witches in this play, or that they are endowed with superhuman sources of knowledge. But the question is, do they in reality turn Macbeth to crime? In one of the chapters devoted to this play I have dwelt on the importance of the point that Macbeth has been already meditating treason in his heart when he meets the Witches on the heath. His secret thoughts—which he betrays in his guilty start—have been an invitation to the powers of evil, and they have obeyed the summons: Macbeth has already ventured a descent, and they add an impulse downward. To bring this out the more clearly, Shakespeare keeps Banquo side by side with Macbeth through the critical stages of the

i. iii. 51.

temptation: Banquo has made no overtures to temptation, and to him the tempters have no mission. It is noticeable that where the two warriors meet the Witches on the heath it is Banquo who begins the conversation. CHAP. XX. I. iii. 38–50.

Banquo. How far is't called to Forres?

No answer. The silence attracts his attention to those he is addressing.

What are these
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't?

Still no answer.

Live you? or are you aught
That man may question?

They signify in dumb show that they may not answer.

You seem to understand me,
By each at once her chappy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Still he can draw no answer. At last Macbeth chimes in:—

Speak, if you can: what are you?

The tamperer with temptation has spoken, and in a moment they break out, 'All hail, Macbeth!' and ply their supernatural task. Later on in the scene, when directly challenged by Banquo, they do respond and give out an oracle for him. But into his upright mind the poison-germs of insight into the future fall harmlessly; it is because Macbeth is already tainted that these breed in him a fever of crime. In the second incident of the Witches, so far from their being the tempters, it is Macbeth who seeks them and forces from them knowledge of the future. Yet, even here, what is the actual effect of their revelation upon Macbeth? It is, like that of his air-drawn dagger, only to marshal him along the way that he is going. They bid him beware Mac- 57. III. v. and IV. i. IV. i. 74.

CHAP. XX.

duff: he answers, 'Thou hast harp'd my fear aright.' They give him preternatural pledges of safety: are these a help to him in enjoying the rewards of sin? On the contrary, as a matter of fact we find Macbeth, in panic of suspicion, seeking security by means of daily butchery; the oracles have produced in him confidence enough to give agony to the bitterness of his betrayal, but not such confidence as to lead him to dispense with a single one of the natural bulwarks to tyranny. The function of the Witches throughout the action of this play is exactly expressed by a phrase Banquo uses in connection with them: they are only 'instruments of darkness,' assisting to carry forward courses of conduct initiated independently of them. Macbeth has made the destiny which the Witches reveal.

iv. ii. 4, &c.

i. iii. 124.

Illuminating human action.

Again, supernatural agency is used to illuminate human action: the course of events in a drama not ceasing to obey natural causes, but becoming, by the addition of the supernatural agency, endowed with a new art-beauty. The great example of this is the *Oracular Action*. This important element of dramatic effect—how it consists in the working out of Destiny from mystery to clearness, and the different forms it assumes—has been discussed at length in a former chapter. The question here is, how far do we find such superhuman knowledge used as a force in the movement of events? As Shakespeare handles oracular machinery, the conditions of natural working in the course of events are not in the least degree altered by the revelation of the future. The actor's belief (or disbelief) in the oracle may be one of the circumstances which have influenced his action—as it would have done in the real life of the age—but to the spectator, to whom the Drama is to reveal the real governing forces of the world, the oracular action is presented not as a force but as a light. It gives to a course of events the illumination that can be in actual fact given to it by History, the office of which is to make each detail of a story interesting

The Oracular Action.

in the light of the explanation that comes when all the details are complete. Only it uses the supernatural agency to project this illumination into the midst of the events themselves, which History cannot give till they are concluded; and also it carries the art-effect of such illumination a stage further than History could carry it, by making it progressive in intelligibility, and making this progress keep pace with the progress of the events themselves. Fate will allow none but Macduff to be the slayer of Macbeth. True: but Macduff (who moreover knows nothing of his destiny) is the most deeply injured of Macbeth's subjects, and as a fact we find it needs the news of his injury to rouse him to his task; as he approaches the battle he feels that the ghosts of his wife and children will haunt him if he allows any other to be the tyrant's executioner. Thus far the interpretation of History might go: but the oracular machinery which Shakespeare has introduced points dimly to Macduff before the first breath of the King's suspicion has assailed him, and the suggestiveness becomes clearer and clearer as the convergence of events carries the action to its climax. The natural working of human events has been undisturbed: only the spectator's mind has been endowed with a special illumination for receiving them.

iv. iii. v. vii. 15.

The Supernatural as Dramatic Background.

In another and very different way we have supernatural agency called in to throw a peculiar illumination over human events. In dealing with the movement of *Julius Cæsar* I have described at length the *Supernatural Background* of storm, tempest, and portent, which assist the emotional agitation throughout the second stage of the action. These are clearly supernatural in that they are made to suggest a mystic sympathy with, and indeed prescience of, mutations in human life. Yet their function is simply that of illumination: they cast a glow of emotion over the spectator as he watches the train of events, though all the while the action of these events remains within the sphere of natural

CHAP. XX. causes. In narrative and lyric poetry this endowment of nature with human sympathies becomes the commonest of poetic devices, personification; and here it never suggests anything supernatural because it is so clearly recognised as belonging to expression. But 'expression' in the Drama extends beyond language, and takes in presentation; and it is only a device in presentation that tumult in nature and tumult in history, each perfectly natural by itself, are made to have a suggestion of the supernatural by their coincidence in time. After all there is no real meaning in storm any more than in calm weather, only that contemplative observers have transferred their own emotions to particular phases of nature: it would seem, then, a very slight and natural reversal of the process to call in this humanised nature to assist the emotions which have created it.

In these various forms Shakespeare introduces supernatural agency into his dramas. In my discussion of them it will be understood that I am not in the least endeavouring to explain away the reality of their supernatural character. My purpose is to show for how small a proportion of his total effect Shakespeare draws upon the supernatural, allowing it to carry further or to illustrate, but not to mould or determine a course of events. It will readily be granted that he brings effect enough out of a supernatural incident to justify the use of it to our rational sense of economy.

Motive Force as a part of Design.

When all these special Dramatic Motives have been considered there still remains an interest of Motive Force belonging to a plot considered purely as a piece of design. In the adaptation of means to ends, which is one phase of design, it is clear that our sense of economy is gratified when we see single devices producing multiplicity of effects; when the successive incidents do not appear dependent upon any arbitrary will of the author, but, on the contrary, it is only necessary to assume a few postulates, and the rest of the story seems to follow from these of itself. It is a function,

then, of plot analysis to discover the main motive force of any play. Sometimes this is found in a Motive Personage: great part of the action in *Othello* is carried forward directly by the energy of Iago, and in *As You Like It* by the activity of Rosalind. In the latter case we can go further, and point to a distinct Motive Circumstance—Rosalind's disguise —as responsible for the larger proportion of the dramatic entanglement. In connection with the *Merchant of Venice*, it was pointed out how one of the actions—the Caskets Story —motives all the rest, the hero serving to complicate, the heroine to resolve. *Love's Labour's Lost* gives us at the outset a Motive Situation: Biron in the first scene sees how the proclamation of celibacy, taken in conjunction with the forgotten circumstance of the Princess's visit, constitutes a sort of unstable equilibrium in social relations, and the working from this back to nature constitutes the whole plot. The same description applies to *Lear*, except that Lear himself creates the unstable situation by his false distribution of power; and thus the first act generates what all the rest of the play has to work out. In *The Tempest*, one personage, Antonio, has been the source of the complication, while another, Prospero, by his power of enchantment is the sole contriver of the Resolution. Often in Passion Movement the Fall and the Rise seem natural parts of a single action. Precisely as the effort which throws a ball into the air seems to the eye all that is responsible for the ball's eventually turning round and descending, so when the conspirators in *Julius Cæsar*, or the hero in *Macbeth*, have risen by their energy to a climax, they seem to fall by no other force than the exhaustion of their original energy against a sort of moral gravitation. This is true also of *Richard III*, with the exception that in this play the Enveloping Action—the feud of York and Lancaster—yields considerable part of the Motive Force: Richard does much to carry forward the progress of this war, but he is himself a product of it, and is

Motive Personages.

Motive Circumstance.

Motive Action.

Motive Situation.

Complicating and Resolving Personages.

Rise and Fall a single Motive.

The Enveloping Action a source of Motion,

CHAP. XX. eventually swept by its momentum to destruction. In most of the cases previously mentioned the Enveloping Action of the play is responsible for some part of the Motive Force: the Witches assist the career of Macbeth, though they do not alter its direction; and the fickleness of the Roman mob counts for something in the sum of forces which produce the downfall of the Republicans. And such a consideration lends especial interest to the case of plays mentioned in a previous paragraph, where a further Revolution makes the Enveloping Action share the movement of the play; and, in the particular case of *As You Like It*, the elaborate Frame which has brought into existence and supported the main actions of the play is by the consummation of these itself shattered and brought to an end.

and undergoing Motive reaction.

Conclusion. The plan laid down for this work has now been followed to its completion. The object I have had in view throughout has been the *recognition* of inductive treatment in literary study. For this purpose it was first necessary to distinguish the inductive method from other modes of treatment founded on arbitrary canons of taste and comparisons of merit, so natural in view of the popularity of the subject-matter, and to which the history of Literary Criticism has given an unfortunate impetus. This having been done in the Introduction, the body of the work has been occupied in applying the inductive treatment to some of the masterpieces of Shakespeare. The practical effect of such exposition has been, it may be hoped, to intensify the reader's appreciation of the poet, but also to suggest that the detailed and methodical analysis which in literary study is usually reserved for points of language is no less applicable to a writer's subject-matter and art. But to entitle Dramatic Criticism to a place in the circle of the inductive sciences it has further appeared necessary to lay down a scheme for the study as a

whole, that should be scientific both in the relation of its parts to one another, and in the attainment of a completeness proportioned to the area to which the enquiry was limited, and the degree of development to which literary method has at present attained. The proper method for the nascent science was fixed as the enumeration and arrangement of topics; and by analogy with the other arts a simple scheme for Dramatic Criticism was found, in which all the results of the analysis performed in the first part of the book could be readily distributed under one or other of the main topics—Character, Passion and Plot. Incidentally the discussion of Shakespeare has again and again reminded us of just that greatness in the modern Drama which judicial criticism with its inflexibility of standard so persistently missed. Everywhere early criticism recognised our poet's grasp of human nature, yet its almost universal verdict of him was that he was both irregular in his art as a whole, and in particular careless in the construction of his plots. We have seen, on the contrary, that Shakespeare has elevated the whole conception of Plot, from that of a mere unity of action obtained by reduction of the amount of matter presented, to that of a harmony of design binding together concurrent actions from which no degree of complexity was excluded. And, finally, instead of his being a despiser of law, we have had suggested to us how Shakespeare and his brother artists of the Renaissance form a point of departure in legitimate Drama so important as amply to justify the instinct of history which named that age the Second Birth of literature.

TOPICS OF DRAMATIC SCIENCE.

- **Character**
  - Single Character-Interest or Character-Interpretation
    - Interpretation as an hypothesis
    - Canons of Interpretation
  - Complex Character-Interest
    - Character-Contrast and Duplication
    - Character-Grouping
  - Character-Development
- **Passion**
  - Single Passion-Interest
    - Incident and Situation
    - Effect
      - Irony
      - Nemesis
      - Dramatic Foreshadowing
  - Complex Passion-Interest or Passion-Tone
    - Mixture of Tones
    - Tone-Clash, Humour, Tone-Storm
  - Tone-Movement
    - Tone-Play and Tone-Relief
    - Metrical Alternation
- **Plot**
  - Single Action
    - General conception of Single Actions
    - Forms of Dramatic Action
  - Complex Action
    - General conception of Complex Action
    - Analysis of Complex Action into Single Actions, with Canons of Analysis
    - Economy
      - Connection
        - Contact and Linking
        - Interweaving
        - Envelopment
      - Dependence
      - Symmetry
        - Balance
        - Parallelism and Contrast
  - Movement [Motive Form]
    - Simple Movement: the Line of Motion a straight line
    - Action-Movement or Complication and Resolution: the Line of Motion a curve
    - Passion-Movement or Strain and Reaction: the Line of Passion a
      - Regular Arch
      - Inclined Plane
      - Wave Line
    - Compound (or Relative) Movement
      - Similar Motion
      - Contrary Motion
      - Convergent Motion
    - Turning-points
      - Catastrophe: or Focus of Movement
      - Centre of Plot
      - Further Resolution
  - Movement [Motive Force]
    - Dramatic Providence
    - Poetic Justice: or Retribution as a form of Art-beauty
    - Pathos: or [unretributive] Fate as a form of Art-beauty
    - The Supernatural
      - Destiny rationalised
        - Objectively in Irony
        - Subjectively in Infatuation
      - Supernatural Agency
        - Intensifying human action
        - Illuminating human action
          - The Oracular
          - Supernatural Background
- ***Mechanical Construction***
  - Reduction of Difficulties: especially, Rationalisation and Derationalisation.
  - Constructive Economy: utilisation of mechanical persons and details.
  - Constructive Processes: Dramatic Background, Dramatic Hedging, Preparation, etc.
  - Constructive Conventionalities: especially, Scenic Unities of Place and Time.
  - Constructive Unity
    - Dramatic Colouring
    - Central Ideas

APPENDIX.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS OF PLOTS.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

An Action-Drama

Scheme of Actions

Main Plot.
- First Main **Cross Nemesis** Action: Story of the Jew: complicated and resolved.
- Underplot.
  - Sub-Action to First Main, also Link Action: Jessica and Lorenzo: simple movement.
  - *Comic Relief Action: Launcelot: stationary*[1].
  - Sub-Action to Second Main: Episode of the Rings: complicated and resolved.
- Second Main **Problem** Action: Caskets Story: simple movement.
- External Circumstance[2]: The (rumoured) Shipwrecks.

Economy

Two Main Actions connected by Common Personage [Bassanio] and by Link Action [Jessica].

General Interweaving.

Balance. The First Main Action, which is complicated, balances the Second, which is simple, by the additions to the latter of the Jessica interest transferred to it, and the Episode of the Rings generated out of it. [Pages 82, 88.]

Movement

Action-Movement: with Contrary Motion between the two Main Actions. The First Main complicated and resolved by the Second

[1] Stationary, as having no place in the movement of the plot: its separateness from the rest of the Jessica Action only for purposes of Tone-effect, as Comic Relief.

[2] 'External' as not included in any action, 'Circumstance' because it presents itself as a single detail instead of the series of details necessary to make up an Action. An External Circumstance is analogous to an Enveloping Action: outside the other Actions, yet in contact with them at certain points.

Main [hero of Second, Bassanio, is Complicating Force; heroine of Second, Portia, is Resolving Force], the Complication assisted by the External Circumstance of the Shipwrecks—in process of resolving the First generates a Complication to the Second in the form of the Episode of the Rings, which is self-resolved. [Pages 66, 375.]

Motive Force: The Second Main Action thus serves as Motive Action to the rest: assisted by the Motive Circumstance of the Shipwreck.

Turning-Points

Centre of Plot: Scene of Bassanio's Choice (iii. ii.) in which the Complicating and Resolving Forces are united and all the Four Actions meet. [Pages 67-8.]

Catastrophe: Portia's Judgment in the Trial (iv. i, from 299).

RICHARD THE THIRD

A Passion-Drama

Scheme of Actions

Main **Nemesis** Action: Life and Death of Richard.

Underplot: System of **Cross Nemesis** Actions connecting Main with York side of Enveloping Action.

CLARENCE has betrayed the Lancastrians for the sake of the House of York:

He falls by a treacherous death from the KING of the House of York. — To this the QUEEN and her kindred have been assenting parties [**iii.** ii. 62–5]:

The shock of Clarence's death as announced by Gloster kills the King (**iii.** i. 131), leaving the Queen and her kindred at the mercy of their enemies. — Unseemly Exultation of their great enemy HASTINGS:

The same treachery step by step overtakes Hastings in his Exultation [**iii.** iv. 15–95). — In this treacherous casting off of Hastings when he will no longer support them BUCKINGHAM has been a prime agent [**iii.** i, from 157; **iii.** ii. 114]:

By precisely similar treachery Buckingham himself is cast off when he hesistates to go further with Richard [**iv.** ii. and **v.** i].

Link **Nemesis** Action connecting Main with LANCASTER side of Enveloping Action: Marriage of Richard and Anne (page 113).
Enveloping **Nemesis** Action: The War of the Roses [the Duchess of York introduced to mark the York side, Queen Margaret to mark the Lancastrian side].

Economy

All the Actions bound together by the Enveloping Action of which they make up a phase.
Parallelism: the common form of Nemesis.
Central Personage: Richard.

Movement

Passion-Movement, with Similar Motion [form Nemesis repeated throughout (page 373)].
Motive Force: The Enveloping Action and Richard as Motive Personage. [Page 395.]

Turning-points

Centre of Plot: Realisation of Margaret's Curses [turn of Enveloping Action] in iii. iii. 15.
Catastrophe: Realisation of Nemesis in the Main Action: iv. ii, from 45.

MACBETH

A Passion-Drama

Scheme of Actions

Main **Character** Action: Rise and Fall of Macbeth.
Character Counter-Action: Lady Macbeth.
Character Sub-Action: covering and involved in the Rise: Banquo.
Character Sub-Action: covering and involving the Fall: Macduff. [Pages 129, 142.]
Enveloping **Supernatural** Action: The Witches.

Economy

Parallelism: Triple form of Nemesis, Irony and Oracular Action extending to the Main Action, to its parts the Rise and Fall separately, and through to the Enveloping Action.
Contrast as a bond between the Main and Counter-Action.
Balance: the Rise by the Fall, the Sub-Action to the Rise by the Sub-Action to the Fall. [Page 367.]

Movement

Passion-Movement, with Similar Motion between all.
Motive Force: The Main Action—partly assisted by Enveloping Action. [Pages 387, 396.]

Turning-points

Centre of Plot: Change from unbroken success to unbroken failure: **iii.** iii. 18. [Page 127.]
Catastrophe: Divided: First Shock of Nemesis: Appearance of Banquo's Ghost (**iii.** iv).
Final Accumulation of Nemesis: Revelation of Macduff's birth (**v.** viii. 12).

JULIUS CÆSAR

A Passion-Drama

Scheme of Actions

Main **Nemesis** Action: Rise and Fall of the Republican Conspirators.

- Sub-Action to the Rise **[Character-decline]**: The Victim Cæsar.
- Sub-Action to the Fall **[Character-rise]**: The Avenger Antony.

Enveloping Action: the Roman Mob.

Economy

Balance about the Centre: the Rise by the Fall, the Sub-Action to the Rise by the Sub-Action to the Fall.

Movement

Passion-Movement, with Similar Motion between the Main and Sub-Actions. [The form of the Main is distributed between the two Sub-Actions: compare page 374.]

Motive Force: The Main Action, slightly assisted by the Enveloping Action. (Page 396.)

Turning-points

The Centre of Plot and Catastrophe coincide: III. i. between 121 and 122.

KING LEAR

A Passion-Drama

Scheme of Actions

Main Plot: a **Problem** Action: Family of Lear: falling into

Generating Action: [the Problem].	Lear's unstable settlement of the kingdom, power transformed from the good to the bad.
System of Tragedies [the Solution].	**Double Nemesis** Action: Lear receiving good from the injured and evil from the favoured children. **Tragic** Action: Cordelia: Suffering of the innocent. **Tragic** Action: Goneril and Regan: Evil passions endowed with power using it to work their own destruction.

Underplot: **an Intrigue** Action: Family of Gloucester: falling into

Generating Action: [the Intrigue].	Gloucester deceived into reversing the positions of Edgar and Edmund.
System of Tragedies [its Nemesis].	**Double Nemesis** Action: Gloucester receiving good from the injured and evil from the favoured child. **Tragic** Action: Edgar: Suffering of the innocent. **Tragic** Action: Edmund: Power gained by intrigue used for the destruction of the intriguer.

Central Link Personage between Main Plot and Underplot: Gloucester (page 376).

Sub-Actions, linking Main and Underplot, or different elements of the Main together.

- **First Pair:** From the good side of the Main: Kent. — Crossing & complicating one another.
- **First Pair:** From the evil side of the Main: Oswald. — Crossing & complicating one another.
- **Second Pair:** From the good side of the Main assisting Nemesis on Evil Agent of the Underplot: Albany.
- **Second Pair:** From the evil side of the Main assisting Nemesis on Good Victim of the Underplot: Cornwall.
- **Third Pair:** Cross Intrigues between the Evil sides of Main and Underplot { Goneril and Edmund / Regan and Edmund } culminating in destruction of all three (v. iii. 96, 221–7, and compare 82 with 160).

Farcical Relief Action: The Fool: Stationary.

Enveloping Action: The French War: originating ultimately in the Initial Action and becoming the Objective of the dénouement. [Page 377.]

Economy

The Underplot dependent to the Main (page 366).
Especially: Parallelism and Contrast (page 367–9).
Central Linking by Gloucester.
Interweaving: Linking by Sub-Actions, &c., and movement to a common Objective.
Envelopment in common Enveloping Action.

Movement

Passion-Movement, with Convergent Motion between the Main and Underplot, and their parts: the Lear and Gloucester systems by the visit to Gloucester's Castle drawn to a Central Focus and then moving towards a common Objective in the Enveloping Action. [Pages 376–7.]
Motive Force: The Motive Situation set up by the Generating Actions.

Turning-points

Catastrophe: at the end of the Initial Action, the Problem being set up in practical action (page 205).
Centre of Plot: the summit of emotional agitation when three madnesses are brought into contact (page 223).

OTHELLO

A Passion-Drama

Scheme of Actions

Three **Tragic** Actions:

1. Bianca's illicit liaison with Cassio—culminates in her being arrested as his murderer (v. i. fin.).
2. Roderigo's pursuit of Desdemona—culminates in his murder.
3. True love of Othello and Desdemona—ends in jealousy, murder, suicide.

Four **Intrigues** centering in Iago:

4. Iago *versus* Roderigo: to get money out of him and then get rid of him (v. i. 14).—[Succeeds.]
5. Iago *versus* Cassio: to get his place. [Arising out of Cassio's appointment (i. i.)—successful (iii. iii. fin.).]
6. Iago *versus* Cassio: to destroy him. [Arises out of general hatred (v. i. 19) and marriage jealousy (ii. i. 316).—Partially fails and assists the Reaction.]
7. Iago *versus* Othello: to make him the victim of his own jealousy. [Arises out of general hatred (i. i. init.) and marriage jealousy (ii. i. 304, &c).—Succeeds.]

Reaction:

8. Nemesis upon Iago.—[All his Intrigues recoil on him: see page 239.]

Faint Enveloping Action: The Turkish War.

Economy and Movement

The main Economy of the plot lies in the Convergent Motion of all the Actions to a common Culmination with Reaction. Chiefly through a series of Link Devices:

By the device of making Cassio the object of Othello's jealousy (I. iii. 400):

Nos. 6 and 7 are merged in one action.

By the device of making Cassio in his repentance utilise Desdemona (II. iii. 319):

No. 3 is made to work in with Nos. 6 and 7.

By the device of making Cassio the object of Roderigo's jealousy (II. i. from 220)—and the device of utilising the Commission (IV. ii. 220):

No. 2 is made to co-operate with Nos. 6 and 7, and at the same time with No. 4:

Thus Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 are now merged in one action.

By the device of the handkerchief (III. iii. 321):

No. 1 is worked in to No. 7:

Thus all the actions are united in one common movement.

Motive Force: Iago is the Motive Personage of the plot: source of the Intrigues, and of the convergence of the Actions, and object of the Reaction.

Turning-points

Catastrophe: V. ii. 140: First hint of the Reaction.

Centre of Plot: III. iii. 90: Climax of Main Action (No. 3) before its Fall begins.

THE TEMPEST

An Action-Drama

Constructed in the Scenic Unities of the Classical Drama[1].

Scheme of Actions

Main Plot: A pair of **Motive** Counter-Actions.

Complicating **Intrigue** Action: *Conspiracy of Antonio and Sebastian against Prospero.*

Motive Sub-Actions.
- Sub-Action to the Complicating Action: Intrigue of Sebastian and Antonio against Alonso.
- Sub-Action to the Resolving Action: Ariel and the invisible music.

Resolving **Providence** Action: Prospero on the Island.

Preparation Sub-Actions.
- *On the Complicating side* [*Judgment*]: *Caliban and Prospero* (I. ii).
- *On the Resolving side* [*Mercy*]: *Ariel's deliverance* (I. ii).

Underplot: A pair of Dependent Link Actions, motived with the Main Plot.

- Love of Ferdinand and Miranda: linking the children of the two sides of the play.
- Conspiracy of Caliban and Stephano: linking the servants of the two sides of the play.

Mechanical Personages, outside the strict movement yet faintly motived with the Main and Underplot (see page 261).

- The Crowd of Sailors, led by Boatswain.
- The Crowd of Courtiers, led by Gonzalo.

Enveloping **Supernatural** Action: Enchantment.

[1] Actions outside the scenic unity are printed in italics.

Economy

Dependence and Linking between Main and Underplot.

Parallelism between separate parts of Underplot and Mechanical Personages.

Common Envelopment.

Movement

Action-Movement. Counter-Action between the two main Actions: the Resolving Action further complicates the opening complication, and finally resolves it (v. i. 20)—Similar Motion between Main and Underplot (and Mechanical Personages)—Contrary Motion between the separate members of each—all the actions Convergent by the link Prospero to the final scene of universal restoration.

Motive Force. Two Motive Personages: Antonio of the Complication, Prospero (with the aid of the Enveloping Action) of the Resolution.

Turning-Points

Centre of Plot: In Act iii the different Actions successively reach their full complication. [See page 378 note.]

Catastrophe: The change from Judgment to Mercy: v. i. 20.

Further Resolution: The Resolving Force demotived: Prospero renouncing his enchantment (v. i. 51).

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

An Action-Drama

Scheme of Actions

Main **Humour** Action: The Celibate Scheme disconcerted by the French Embassy: rises in complication out of the initial situation and self-resolved.—Falls into two phases:

Artificial attitude of Celibates to one another—breaks down (**iv.** iii) and abandoned.

Artificial attitude of Celibates to ladies: gradually abandoned (from **iv.** iii).

Underplot.

Two **Character-Groups**:

(*a*) Armado: set off by Moth, Costard, Jaquenetta, &c. [Euphuism.]

(*b*) Holofernes: set off by Nathaniel and Dull. [Pedantry.]

Out of which rise two Sub-Actions:

(A) **Intrigue** Sub-Action of Armado and Jaquenetta—setting off first phase of main Action and Complications.

(B) **Farcical** Sub-Action: Pageant of the Worthies—setting off second phase of the Main Action and Resolution.

Enveloping **Motive** Action: The king of France's illness [generating the Complication] and Death [bringing about a Further Resolution].

Economy

Common Envelopment.

The Underplot and Main by Dependence.

Movement

Action-Movement of Complication and Resolution [with Further Resolution by a turn in the Enveloping Action: page 297–8]. —Similar Motion between Main and Underplot.

Motive Force: The whole movement comes from the Initial Motive Situation (page 395): this from the Enveloping Action in conflict with the Complicating Circumstance of the Vow of Celibacy.—The Further Resolution motived by the Enveloping Action.

Turning-points

Centre of Plot: The Discovery Scene (iv. iii). See page 378 note.

Catastrophe: v. ii. 522: the Representatives of conventionality join in ridiculing their own pageant.

Further Resolution: v. ii. 723: Entrance of Mercade with news of the king of France's death.

AS YOU LIKE IT

An Action-Drama

Scheme of Actions

Frame: A System of Enveloping Actions, one within another (pages 363-5):

Outer Enveloping Action: Civil War of the Dukes.
Inner Enveloping Action: Feud in the De Boys family.
Woodland Action: Life in Arden Forest.
Humour Action: Melancholy of Jaques.

These form a setting to

Main Plot: A System of Four Love Actions:

1. Love and (Genuine) Humour: Orlando and Rosalind: initiated in complication out of the Enveloping Action and self-resolved.
2. Love at first sight: Oliver and Celia: initiated out of the Frame and consummated.
3. Conventional Pastoral Love: Silvius and Phœbe: rises out of the Frame, complicated and resolved by No. 1.
4. Love and (Professional) Humour: initiated out of the Frame Actions and consummated.

[Half-developed Character Sub-Action: Adam—ignored after second act.]

Economy

Actions united by Common Envelopment and Movement.

Movement

Action-Movement: with Convergent Motion between separate Actions up to a common Culmination: dropping of Rosalind's disguise. Interference of the three Humour Actions with the rest and with one another. [Pages 307, 309.]

Motive Force.

(1) The Frame Actions initiate the Actions of the Main system, assisting their complication and [arrival of Oliver] resolution: then are self-destroyed coincidently with consummation of the Main System. [Pages 364–5.]

(2) Rosalind serves as further Motive Personage.

Turning-points

Centre of Plot: III. ii. 313: Orlando and the disguised Rosalind meet for the first time.

Catastrophe: V. iv. 113: Rosalind drops her disguise.

Further Resolution: V. iv. 156: Entrance of Jaques de Boys with news.

INDEXES

GENERAL INDEX.

*** *For particular Characters or Scenes see under their respective plays.*

Abbott, Dr., quoted 15.
Academy, French 18.
Achilles and the River-god 193.

Action a fundamental element of Drama 323–5—its threefold division 324—Plot as pure Action 325—or the intellectual side of Action 356.
Action, Analysis of: 360–5—canons of Analysis 360–1.
'Action-Drama' as substitute for 'Comedy' 372–3.
Action, Economy of: 365–9. General notion and connection with Analysis 365—Economic Forms 365–6—Connection and Linking 365–6—Dependence 366—Symmetry 366–9—Balance 367—Parallelism and Contrast 367–9—Economy in Technical Analyses of the plays 401–16.
Action, Enveloping 361–5—Illustrations: *Richard III* 361—111–2—*Macbeth* 362—*Julius Cæsar* 362—*King Lear* 362–3—*As You Like It* 363–5.
Actions, focussing of: 209.
Action, Forms of Dramatic: 358–9, 125, 202.
Action, Schemes of in Technical Analyses, 401–16.
Action, Single and Complex 324, 357, &c.
Action, Systems of: 108, 110, 208.
Action, Unity of: 14, 324, 358–9—unity of action in Modern Drama becomes harmony 359.
Actions, Varieties of: Character-Action 358; Comic Action 358, 401; Enveloping 361–5; Farcical 408; Generating 407; Humorous 358, 413; Initial and Resultant 208; Intrigue 358, 207; Irony 358; Link 81, 208; Main and Subordinate 359; Motive 358; Nemesis 358, &c.; Oracular 358, &c.; Problem 358, 202; Providence 411; Relief 401, 408; Rise and Fall 358, 119, 127; Stationary 401; Story 358; Supernatural 411; Tragic 358, 407; Triple 358, 125, 142.

Actor, Acting 98, 321. [*See* Stage-Representation.]
Addison: on scientific progress 5—his Critique of *Paradise Lost* 16—his list of English poets 16—his *Cato* 17, 19—on rules of art 20—on Rymer 21.
Affectations attacked by Humour the Central Idea of *Love's Labour's Lost* 285—compare *As You Like It* 300.
Analysis as a stage in scientific development 318.
Analysis, Dramatic: 360. [*See* Action, Analysis of.]
Ancient Drama 125, 387—Mixture of Tones an impossibility 345—the Supernatural its leading Motive 387—its unity of action different from that of the Modern Drama 359.
Ancient Thought, points of difference from Modern: 44, 125–7, 137.
Antigone and Poetic Justice 267.

Antithesis of Outer and Inner (or Practical and Intellectual) Life 144-6—as an element in Character-Interpretation 146—applied to the age of Macbeth 147—key to the portraiture of Macbeth and his wife 147-167—applied to the age of Julius Cæsar in the form of policy *v.* justice 168-71—connected with character of Antony 182, Brutus 171-6, Cæsar 176-81, Cassius 181—applied to the group as a whole 183-4.

Apparitions: *Richard III* 122, *Macbeth* 135-6, 140, 167, 389-91. [*See* Supernatural.]

Arch as an illustration of dramatic form 127, 372—applied to the Movement in *Julius Cæsar* 186, 372—to *King Lear*: Main Plot 209—Underplot 215-7.

Aristotle: his criticism inductive 16—judicial 16—his position in the progress of Induction 320—made Stage-Representation a division of Dramatic Criticism 321—on the purification of our emotions in the Drama 386.

Art applied to the repulsive and trivial 90—common terms in the different arts 168—Dramatic Art 40, 317, &c.—Art in general affords a fundamental basis for the Analysis of Drama 323—concrete and abstract elements in all the arts alike 323.

As You Like It, Play of: How it presents various forms of Humour in conflict with a single Conventionality 300 and Chapter XV—compared with *Love's Labour's Lost* 299, 300.—Three types of Humour: Healthy (Rosalind) 300, Professional (Touchstone) 301, Morbid (Jaques) 301-6—The Pastoral Conventionality 306—The three Humours in conflict with the Pastoral Conventionality 307-9—the three Humours in conflict with one another 309-13. The play as a study of Dramatic Colouring 300 and Chapter XV. Affords examples of (Comic) Tone-Storm 347—Irony of Circumstances 388 (note).

As You Like It, Characters in: Audrey 307. Corin 307. Jaques: his disputed character 301—explained as the morbid humour of melancholy 302-6—Jaques in contrast with the Duke and his followers 304-6—with the pastoral surroundings 304—with Orlando 311—with the Fool 306, 311—with Rosalind 305, 312. Phœbe 307. Rosalind: representative of healthy humour 300, 306—her disguise a humorous situation embodied 307—in conflict with the pastoral surroundings 307—with the Fool 309-10—with Jaques 305, 312. Silvius 307. Touchstone: representative of professional humour 301—in conflict with the pastoral surroundings 308—with Rosalind 309-10—with Jaques 311. William 307.

As You Like It, Plot of: Technical Analysis 415-6.—Its Enveloping Action as Motive Force 396—Further Resolution 380—Rosalind a Motive Personage 395.

Background, Dramatic 327, 329, 247-9.

Background of Nature as an element in dramatic effect 192-4, compare 327, 329—its widespread use in poetry 192—analysed 192—illustrated in *Julius Cæsar* in connection with the Supernatural 193-6—used in Centrepiece of *King Lear* 214—plays a great part in *The Tempest* 247-51, 326—considered as an example of the Supernatural illuminating human action 393.

Balance 82—as an Economic form 367—*see* Technical Analyses 401-16.

Betrothed, The: as example of Oracular Action 132.
Blank Verse 13, and *see* Metrical Variation.

Catastrophe, or Focus of Movement: 378–9—**Examples** 378–9—in Technical Analyses 401–16.
Central Ideas: 264 and Chapter XIII, 329.—Theory of 264—distinction between direct and indirect bearing 265—relation to Dramatic Colouring 329—illustrated in *Tempest* 266 and Chapter XIII—*Love's Labour's Lost* 284 and Chapter XIV, &c.
Central Personages 119—Gloucester in *King Lear* 376, 408—Richard 404.
Centre, Dramatic 68, 186—Shakespeare's fondness for central effects 186, 378.
Centre of Plot 378—**Examples** 378–9—in Technical Analyses 401–16.

Character: as an element in Judgment 56—as an Elementary Topic of Dramatic Criticism 324—subdivided 325.
Character, Interest of: 330 and Chapter XVII. Character in Drama presented concretely 330. Unity in Character-Interest 330–2—Complexity in Character-Interest 332–5—Development in Character-Interest 335–7. Character-Interpretation 330–2. Character-Foils 332—Contrast 333—Duplication 333—Grouping 334.
Character-Contrast as a general term 333–5—strictly so-called 333, 144 and Chapter VII—as an Elementary Topic of Dramatic Criticism 325—**Illustrations**: *Merchant of Venice* 82–7—*Macbeth* 144 and Chapter VII—*Julius Cæsar* 178, &c.
Character-Development 335–7—**Illustration**: *Macbeth* 335–7.
Character-Duplication 333—**Illustrations**: Murderers in *Richard III*, &c. 334.
Character-Foils 332—**Illustrations**: Jessica to Lorenzo 85—Jessica and Lorenzo to Portia and Bassanio 86—Cassius and Cæsar 179.
Character-Grouping described 168—**Illustrations**: *Julius Cæsar* 169 and Chapter VIII—*Othello* 225–7—*Love's Labour's Lost* 335 and 293–7.
Character-Interpretation 325, 330–2—of the nature of a scientific hypothesis 330—canons of interpretation 331–2—applied to more than one Character becomes Character-Contrast 333—analytical in its nature 186—**Illustrations**: *Richard III* 90 and Chapter IV—Jaques in *As You Like It* 301–6.

Chess with living pieces, an illustration of Passion 185.
Circumstance External 401.
Clash of Tones 345. [*See* Tone.]
Classical Drama 125, 387: *see* Ancient.
Classification a stage in development of Inductive Method 318, 319.
Climax in Passion-Movement 185–7—applied to *Julius Cæsar* 186–8 and Chapter IX. **Illustrated** in *King Lear* 202 and Chapter X. Gradual rise to the climax of the Main Plot 209–15—the climax itself 215—climax of Underplot 215–8—climax of the play double 217—and triple 218, 223—double in *Tempest* 276–9.
Colouring, Dramatic: 328, 329—connection with Central Ideas 329—**Illustrations**: *Macbeth* 328—*Tempest* 246 and Chapter XIII—*As You Like It* 300 and Chapter XV—*Othello* 328.
'Comedy' unsuitable as a term in Shakespeare-Criticism 372–3.
Comic as a Tone, 344.

Complex distinguished from Complicated 74 (note)—applied to Plot of *Merchant of Venice* 74 and Chapter III—Complexity distinguishes the plot of *King Lear* as compared with that of *Julius Cæsar* 186—traced in plot of *King Lear* 202, 208–9, &c.—not inconsistent with simplicity 208, 74—an element of Action 325—applied to Character 332, Passion 343, Plot 359.
Complicated distinguished from Complex 74 (note)—Complicated Movement 370–2.
Complicating Force 67.
Complication and Resolution 66, 370—**Illustration**: *Merchant of Venice* 67.
Connection as an Economic form 365—by Link Personages and Actions 366—by Interweaving 366—by common Envelopment 366.
Construction and Creation as processes in Character-Painting 30.
Contrast as an Economic Form 367; compare Tables 401–16.
Courage, active and passive 146, 179.
Creation and Construction as processes in Character-Painting 30.

Criticism, *à priori* 24, 37. [*See* Criticism, Judicial.]
Criticism, Dramatic: as an Inductive Science 40, 317, &c.—surveyed in outline 317—indirectly by Studies 317—its definition 318–23—its method 318–20—its field 320–23—distinguished from Literary Criticism in general 321—relation of Dramatic Art to Stage-Representation 321–3—Drama and Representation separable in exposition not in idea 322–3—fundamental divisions of Dramatic Criticism 323–5—its elementary Topics tabulated 325, 329—General Table of its Topics 398.
Criticism: History of 7–21. [*See* Criticism Judicial, Shakespeare-Criticism.]
Criticism, Inductive: distinguished from Judicial 2—the two illustrated by the case of Ben Jonson 2–4—confusion of the two 4—gradual development of Inductive method in the history of Criticism 17–21—sphere of Inductive Criticism separate from that of the Criticism of Taste 21—three main points of contrast between Inductive and Judicial Criticism 27–40—(1) as to comparisons of merit 27–32—(2) as to the 'laws' of Art 32–7—(3) as to fixity of standard 37–40. **Difficulties** of Inductive Criticism: want of positiveness in the subject-matter 23–5—absence of 'design' in authors 26—objection as to the ignoring of moral purpose 35—arbitrariness of literary creation 35–7. **Principles** and **Axioms** of Inductive Criticism. Its foundation Axiom: *Interpretation is of the nature of a scientific hypothesis* 25—its antagonism to comparisons of merit 27–9—concerned with differences of kind rather than degree 29–32—Axiom: *Its function to distinguish literary species* 32—principle that each writer is a species to himself 30–2—the laws of Art scientific laws 32–7—Inductive Criticism has no province to deal with faults 34—Axiom: *Art a part of Nature* 36—Axiom: *Literature a thing of development* 37—development to be applied equally to past and new literature 38. **Illustrations** of Inductive Criticism. Applied by Addison 16, 20; Aristotle 16; Fortenelle 19; Perrault 19; Gervinus 20; Dr. Johnson 16.—Applied to the character of Macbeth 24; Music 29; to Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot 30; Beethoven 34.
Criticism, Judicial: distinguished from Inductive 2—the two illustrated by the case of Ben Jonson 2–4—confusion of the two 4—

three main points of contrast between Judicial and Inductive Criticism 27–40—(1) as to comparisons of merit 27–32—(2) as to the 'laws' of Art 32–7—(3) as to fixity of standard 37–40. Illegitimate supremacy of Judicial method in Criticism 4—connected with influence of Renaissance 4—and Journalism 5—defence: Theory of Taste as condensed experience 6—the theory examined: judicial spirit a limit on appreciation 6. History of Judicial Criticism a triumph of authors over critics 7–21. Case of Shakespeare-Criticism 8–11—other authors 11–13—defeat of Judicial Criticism in the great literary questions 13–15—its failure to distinguish the permanent and transitory 15—its tendency to become obsolete 16—its gradual modification in the direction of Inductive method 17–21.
Proper sphere of Judicial Criticism 21—outside science 21—and belonging to creative literature 21.
Vices of Judicial Criticism: its arbitrary method of eliminating variability of impression in literary effect 24—its fondness for comparisons of merit 27—its attempt to limit by 'laws' 32–5—its assumption of fixed standards 37–9—its confusion of development with improvement 39. Illustrations of Judicial Criticism: applied by the French Academy 18; Aristotle 16; Boileau 16, 18; Byron 14; Dennis 19; Dryden 9, 12, 13, 17; Edwards 9; Hallam 12; Heywood 10; Jeffrey 12; Dr. Johnson 10, 12, 16, 19, 20; Lansdowne 9; Macaulay 13; Otway 9; Pope 10, 19; Rymer 8, 14, 17; Steevens 12, 15; Theobald 10; Voltaire 9, 14, 17.—Applied to Addison's *Cato* 17; Beethoven 34; Brontë 30; Buckingham 17; Eliot (Geo.) 30; Gray 12; Greek Drama 30; Herodotus 39; Jonson (Ben) 2, 17; Keats 12; Milton 11, 12, 14, 17, 39; Montgomery 13; Roscommon 17; Skakespeare's Plays 8–11, &c.; Shakespeare's Sonnets 12; Spenser 12, 17; Taylor (Jeremy) 39; Waller 17; Walsh 17; Waverley Novels 12; Wordsworth 12.
Criticism of Assaying 2, 6. [*See* Criticism, Judicial.]
Criticism of Taste 2, 6, 21–2. [*See* Criticism, Judicial.]
Cross Nemeses 401, 403, 47, 51.

Dancing (Greek) 321.
Dependence as an Economic form 366.
Derationalisation 247. [*See* Supernatural.]
Design, its significance in Criticism 26.
Destiny interwoven with Nemesis in *Macbeth* 125 and Chapter VI—conception of it in Ancient and Modern Thought 125, 387—phases of Destiny in Modern Drama 127—the Oracular Action one phase of Destiny 130—Irony as a phase of Destiny 137–43—Destiny acting objectively 387–8—rationalised in Modern Drama 387—as a subjective force, Infatuation 388–9—rationalised in Shakespeare 388–9.
Development in literature 37–9—as an element of Action 324–5—applied to character 335–7.
Devices for increasing emotional strain 196.
Differentiation of matter accompanying progress of Inductive Science 320—applied to Dramatic Criticism 320–3.
Difficulties, Reduction of 326, 329.
Dividing line, Mystery of 278.
Drama: the word 'drama' 324—Drama a compound art 321—the Shakespearean branch of the Romantic Drama 43—its relations with Stage-Representation 321–3, 98—one of its purposes to interpret the beauty of fate 386.

Dramatic Satire 3.
Dryden on Spenser 12, 17—on Blank Verse 13—his *Essay on the Drama* 13—his *Essay on Satire* 13—on Milton's Blank Verse 17—on Shakespeare's English 15.
Duplication 333.
Dynamics of Plot 370 and Chapter XX. [*See* Motive Form and Motive Force.]

Economic Devices in *Othello* 234.
Economy of Action 365–9 [*see* Action]—Constructive 326, 329—an economy in Richard's Villainy 100—in providential workings 275.
Effect as a general term in Dramatic Criticism 340—strictly so-called *ib.*—an element of Passion *ib.*—distinguished from Situation and Incident 338—described 340–3. **Special Effects**: Irony 340, Nemesis 342, Dramatic Foreshadowing 342.
Elemental Beings 255–9—Ariel upward-tending (Air and Fire) 256—Caliban downward-tending (Earth and Water) 256.
Elevated as a Tone 344.
Enveloping Action 361–5, 111. **Illustrations**: *Richard III* 111–12—*King Lear* 362–3—*Love's Labour's Lost* 297–9—*As You Like It* 363–5. Analogous to External Circumstances 401 (note)—in Technical Analyses 401–16.
Envelopment as a kind of Connection 366.
Euphuism in Brutus's oration 175—in *Love's Labour's Lost* 286—as a dramatic weapon 288.
External Circumstance 401 (note).

Farcical as a Tone 344, 345.
Fascination as an element in human influence 97.
Fate, determinants of in Drama 380–1 [*see* Motive Force]—fate other than retributive included in Poetic Justice 383—function of Drama to interpret beauty of fate 385–6.
Fault as a critical term 32, 34.
Focussing of trains of passion in *King Lear* 209.
Foils 332. [*See* Character.]
Fool, Institution of the Court: 218–20—Fool in *King Lear* 220–3—in *As You Like It* 301—Clown in *Othello* 348.
Foreshadowing, Dramatic 342–3, 291.
Frame (Enveloping Action) 363–5.
Free Trade and Free Art 35.

Gervinus 11, 20, 127, 372.
Gloucester: *see King Lear* and *Richard III.*
Grouping 334. [*See* Character.]

Hamlet, Play of 390.
Hedging, Dramatic 60, 78, 327, 329. **Illustrations**: Shylock 58–61; Richard III 105; Brutus 176.
Henry V an example of Preparation Stage 240.
Heroic as a Tone 344.
Heroic couplet 30.
History, its interpretation of events compared with the effect of the Oracular Action 392.
Homer: Episode of Achilles and the River-god 193—*Iliad* 23, 193.
Human Interest one of the two leading divisions of Drama 324—further divided *ib.*
Humour: the word analysed 284–5. Humour as the Solvent of Affectation in *Love's Labour's Lost* 284 and Chapter XIV. Humour in *As You Like It*, three types: Healthy Humour of Rosalind 300—Professional Humour of Touchstone 301—Morbid Humour of Jaques 301–6—the three Humours in conflict with the Pastoral Conventionality 307–9—the three in conflict with one another 309–13. Humour as a climax of Tone-Clash 346, 162–3—as a dramatic Motive 386.
Hybris 49, 389.
Hysterical passion in *King Lear* 210–15.

Iago compared with Richard III 92—self-deceived 101. [See *Othello.*]
Idealisation as a dramatic effect 51—applied to the Caskets Story 51–4—of Incident 97.
Iliad 23, 193.
Imitation as a force in developing madness 214–5.
Incident as a division of Passion 338—distinguished from Situation and Effect *ib.* Illustrations: 338–9.
Inclined Plane as a form of Passion-Movement 372.
Inconsistency in characters a mark of unfinished Interpretation 331.
Indirect elements of Character-Interpretation 331, 86.
Individuality of authorship corresponds to differentiation of species 39—individuality an element in the Inner Life 169.
Induction: its connection with facts 1—application to literature 22–40. [*See* Criticism, Inductive.] Stages in the development of Inductive Science 318–20—its progress accompanied by differentiation of subject-matter 320—application to Science of Dramatic Criticism 317 and Chapters XVI to XX—to the definition of Dramatic Criticism 318.
Infatuation: Destiny acting as a subjective force 388—prominence in Ancient Ethics 388—traces in Scripture expression 389—rationalised by Shakespeare 389. Illustrations: Antonio 389, 49; Cæsar 197; Macbeth 389.
Inner Life 144–6. [*See* Antithesis of, &c.]
Interference as a form of Contrary Motion 375—Illustrated in *As You Like It* and *Merchant of Venice* 375.
Interpretation by the actor an element in dramatic analysis 98. [*See* Character-Interpretation.]
Interweaving of Stories 43–4, 58, 66–73, 74 and Chapter III, 81–2, 87–8—of light and serious Stories 69–73. [*See* Story.] Interweaving as a kind of Connection 366—*compare* Technical Analyses 401–16.
Intoxication as a counterpart to enchantment 261.
Intrigue Action 207–8—in the Underplot of *King Lear* 207–8—Intrigues of Goneril and Regan 206, 407—in the plot of *Othello* 227.
Irony as a phase of Destiny 137–9—the word 'irony' 137—Irony of Socrates *ib.*—illustrated by Story of Œdipus 138—in language of Scripture 138—modified in modern conception 138–9—connected with Oracular Action 139—combined with Nemesis 383—as an objective presentation of Destiny 387–8—Irony of Circumstances 388 (note), 341. Dramatic Irony as example of mixed Passion 73—as a mode of emphasising Nemesis 115–9, 120—as one of the triple Forms of Action in *Macbeth* 139–42—as a Dramatic Effect 340–2—this a contribution of the Greek Stage 341—Dramatic Irony extended to the language of a scene 342—Comic Irony 342, 346. Illustrations: in *Merchant of Venice* 73, 342; *Richard III* 115–9, 120, 121, 341, 383; *Macbeth* 139–42, 383; Macduff 143; Banquo 142; the Witches' Action 143; proclamation of Cumberland 387–8; *Julius Cæsar* 341, 197; *King Lear* 341; Story of Œdipus 341; *As You Like It* 388 (note); *Othello* 341, 243.

Jealousy: the word 'Jealousy' 225 (note)—colours the play of *Othello* 225–7.
Jester 218. [*See* Fool.]
Jew, Story of: 44, &c. [*See* Story.]—Feud of Jew and Gentile 60—Jews viewed as social outcasts 83.
Job, Book of: its conclusion as an

example of Dramatic Background of Nature 192.
Johnson, Dr.: on Shakespeare 10–11, 20—on Milton's minor poems 11 — on Blank Verse 14 — on Metaphysical Poetry 16—on Addison's *Cato* 19—on the Unities 20.
Jonson, Ben: 2–4—his Dramatic Satires 3—his Blank Verse 13—his *Catiline* 17.
Journalism: its influence on critical method 5—place of Reviewing in literary classification 21–2.
Judicial Blindness 201, 388. [*See* Infatuation.]

Julius Cæsar, Play of: 168–201, Chapters VIII and IX. As an example of Character-Grouping 168 and Chapter VIII, 334—as a study of Passion and Movement 185 and Chapter IX.
Julius Cæsar, Characters in: Antony balances Cæsar 129—spared by the Conspirators 171—contrasted by Cæsar with Cassius 179–80 — his general character 182–3—its culture 179–80—self-seeking 182—affection for Cæsar 183, 199—his position in the group of characters 183, 184—peculiar tone of his oratory 198—dominant spirit of the reaction 198—upspringing of a character in him 198—his ironical conciliation of the conspirators 199—his oration 199–200—Antony's servant 198. Artemidorus 196.
Brutus: general character 171–6—its equal balance 171–5—its force 171—softness 173—this concealed under Stoicism 173, 174–5, 183 — his culture 173—relations with his Page 173–4—with Portia 173–4—with Cæsar 175—slays Cæsar for what he might become 175—position in the State 176—relations with Cassius 172, 173, 182—overrules Cassius in council 172—his general position in the Grouping 183.
Cæsar: a balance to Antony 129—general discussion of his character 176–81—its difficulty and contradictions 176–8—his vacillation 176–7—explained by the antithesis of Practical and Inner Life 178—Cæsar pre-eminently the Practical man 178–9—strong side of his character 176–7—lacking in the Inner Life 178–9—compared with Macbeth 178—a change in Cæsar and his world 180–1—his superstition 180–1—position in the Grouping 183—different effect of his personality in the earlier and later half of the play 188, 195, 197. Calpurnia 194–5. Casca 172, 194, 195. Cassius: his relations with Brutus 172, 182—brings out the defective side of Cæsar 179—contrasted by Cæsar with Antony 179–80—his character discussed 181–2—Republicanism his grand passion *ib.*—a professional politician 182—his tact 182—his position in the Grouping 183–4—his relish for the supernatural portents 195—his nemesis 342—Cassius and the eagles 342. Decius 181, 195. Ligarius 172. Page of Brutus 173–4, 201. Popilius Lena 172, 197. Portia 173, 174, 196. Roman Mob 188, 200. Soothsayer 196, 342. Trebonius 341.
Julius Cæsar, Incidents and Scenes: Capitol Scene 196–200—Conspiracy Scene 171, 172, 176, 181—its connection with storm and portents 193–4—Incidents of the Fever and Flood 178, 179—Funeral and Will of Cæsar 175, 199–200, 332.
Julius Cæsar, Plot of: Technical Analysis 406.—Affords examples of Enveloping Action 362—Balance 367 — Regular Arch-Movement 372—Similar Motion 374—Turning-points 379—Rise and Fall a single motive 395. [*See* next paragraph.]

Julius Cæsar, Movement of: compared with movement of *King Lear* 186—its simplicity and form of Regular Arch 186, 372—key to the movement the justification of the conspirators' cause 187.
Stages of its Movement: Rise 188–96—Crisis 196–8—Catastrophe and Decline 198–201.
Starting-point in popular reaction against Cæsar 188—Crescendo in the Rise 189–91—the conspiracy formed and developing the Strain begins 191–6—suspense an element in Strain 191—Strain increased by background of the Supernatural 192–6, 393—the conspirators and the victim compared in this stage 194–6. Crisis, the Strain rising to a climax 196–200—exact commencement of the Crisis is marked 196—devices for heightening the Strain 196—the conspirators and victim just before the Catastrophe 197—the justification at its height 197—Catastrophe and commencement of the Decline 198—Antony dominating the Reaction 198—the Mob won to the Reaction 200.
Final stage of an Inevitable Fate: the Strain ceasing 200–1—the representative of the Reaction supreme 200—the position of conspirators and Cæsar reversed 201—judicial blindness 201—the justification ceases 201.

Justice, Poetic, as Dramatic Motive 381–6, 266–8—the term discussed 266, 381—less wide than Providence 266—its negation a literary motive 267—its connection with tragedy 267—Nemesis as a form of Poetic Justice 382–3—Poetic Justice other than Nemesis 383–6.

'Kindness': the word discussed 149–50, 222—'milk of human kindness' 149–50.

King Lear, Play of: as a study in complex Passion and Movement 202 and Chapter X—compared with *Julius Cæsar* 186.

King Lear, Characters in. Cordelia: her conduct in the opening Scene 203–4—her Tragedy 206—friendship for the Fool 223—question of her patriotism 384–6—an illustration of Pathos as a Dramatic Motive 384–6—connection with the Enveloping Action 362—connection with Poetic Justice 267. Cornwall 212. Edgar: his Tragedy 208—his feigned madness and position in the Centrepiece 215–8, 223—his contact with his father and Lear in the hovel 215–8, 340—his madness an emotional climax to the Underplot 216. Edmund compared with Richard III 92—his charge against Edgar 206—an agent in the Underplot 207–8—his Tragedy 208, 216—example of Irony 341—connected with the Enveloping Action 363.
The Fool: Institution of the Fool or Jester 218–20—modern analogue in *Punch* 219—utilised by Shakespeare 219—function of the Fool in *King Lear* 220–3—his personal character 223—friendship with Lear and Cordelia 223.
Gloucester: the central Personage of the Underplot 206–7—Link Personage between Main and Underplot 366—the Chamberlain and friend of Lear 376—his connection with the Enveloping Action 362–3, 408—with the Convergent Motion of the Play, 376–7, 408. Goneril 203, 206, 210, 213, 333, 363, 376–7, 383. Kent represents Conscience in the Opening of the Problem 204–5—his Tragedy 206. Lear: his conduct in the opening scene an example of imperiousness 203–5, 211—his Nemesis double 205–6—gradual on-coming of madness 209–15—Lear in the Centrepiece

of the play 214–5—after the centre madness gives place to shattered intellect 215—his connection with the Fool 220–3—with the Enveloping Action 362–3—an example of Poetic Justice 384. Regan 203, 206, 212, 213, 333, 363, 376–7, 383.
King Lear, Incidents and Scenes of: Opening Scene 203–5—Stocks Scene 211, 384 (note)—Outrage on Gloucester 339—Hovel Scene 215–8, 340.
King Lear, Plot of: Technical Analysis 407–8.—The Main Plot a Problem Action 202–6—the Problem enunciated in action 203–5—solution in a Triple Tragedy 205–6—The Underplot an Intrigue Action 207–8—its Initial Action 207—its resultant a Triple Tragedy parallel with that of the Main Plot 207–8. Affords an example of Plot-Analysis 360—of Enveloping Action in the French War 362–3. Main and Underplot drawn together by common Central Climax 208—by Parallelism and Contrast 206–8, 367–9, 407–8—by Dependence and Linking 366. [*See* next paragraph.]
King Lear, Movement of: 202 and Chapter X—its simplicity 208–9—Lear's madness a common climax to the trains of passion in the Main Plot 209—Rise of the Movement in the waves of on-coming madness 209–15—form of movement a Regular Arch *ib.*—connection of the Fool with the Rise of the Movement 220–23—passage into the Central Climax marked by the Storm 214–5—Central Climax of the Movement 214–8—effect on Lear of the Storm 214—of Contact with Edgar 215—Edgar's madness a common Climax to the trains of passion in the Underplot 215–7—the Central Climax a trio of madness 217–23—an example of Tone-Storm 347.
Kriegspiel 185.

Laius 134.
Law as a term in Criticism and Science generally 32–7.
Light as a Tone 344, 345.
Line of Motion 370–1.
Line of Passion 372.
Linking 366.
Love at first sight a counterpart to Enchantment 260.

Love's Labour's Lost, Play of: How it presents Simple Humour in conflict with various Affectations and Conventionalities 284 and Chapter XIV. Its Central Idea Humour as the solvent of Affectation 285—the Affectations attacked 285–7—humorous attack not inconsistent with sympathy 287—the representatives of Humour in the play 289—conflict of Humour and the Artificial 290, 298—fate of the personages determined by their sense of humour 291—connection of the Central Idea with the structure of the plot 292–9.
Love's Labour's Lost and *As You Like It* compared 300, 299.
The Celibate Scheme 285—Euphuism 286—Pedantry 286—Word-play as a dramatic weapon 288—Metrical system of the play 353–5.
Love's Labour's Lost, Characters in: Armado, his connection with the Central Idea 286—with Euphuism 286—with Jaquenetta (Sub-Action) 286, 292, 296—brought out by contrast 293–5. Biron 287, 291, 293, 298; Boyet 289, 291; Costard 292, 295; Dull 292, 295. Holofernes: his connection with the Central Idea 286—representative of pedantry 286, 292—centre of a Group or Sub-Action 297, 295—brought out by contrast 295.
Jaquenetta 286, 292, 295; Katherine 288. King of Navarre: his connection with the Celibates' scheme 285—his

lack of humour 291—his connection with the Further Resolution 298. Moth 291, 294; Nathaniel 286, 295. Princess of France: representative of Humour 289—her use of word-play 288. Rosaline 288.

Love's Labour's Lost, Incidents and Scenes in: The Central Scene of Mutual Exposure 290–1, 339—Masque Scene 291–2—Pageant of the Worthies 297.

Love's Labour's Lost, Plot of: Technical Analysis 413–4.—Its connection with the Central Idea 292—Main Plot 292–3—Underplot 293–7—Enveloping Action 297–8—An example of Further Resolution 379. Connection of the Movement with Poetic Justice 384—Humour as a motive 386—Motive Situation 395.

Lyrics of Prose 22.

Macaulay 2, 13—on active and passive courage 146.

Macbeth, Play of: affords examples of Dramatic Colouring 328—of Tone-Relief 348—its metrical variations 350, 353.

Macbeth, Character of: an illustration of methodical analysis 24—compared with Richard 92—with Julius Cæsar 178—an example of Character-Development 335–7. General Analysis 147–54, 161, 335–7. Macbeth as the Practical Man 147–54—his nobility superficial 148, 161—his character as analysed by his wife 148–50—illustrated by his soliloquy 151–3—compared in action and in mental conflicts 153, 162—flaws in his completeness as type of the practical 154—Macbeth's superstition 154, 159, 162, 165–6, 167, 335–7—his inability to bear suspense 154, 160, 162–5, 335–7.

Macbeth under temptation 158—in the deed of murder 161—his breakdown and blunder 162—in the Discovery Scene 163—his blunder in stabbing the grooms 163—under the strain of concealment 164—confronted with the Ghost of Banquo 165—nemesis in his old age 167—and his trust in the false oracles 167. Macbeth an example of Infatuation 389—relations with the Witches 390–2—not turned from good to evil by their influence 390.

Macbeth (Lady), Character of: 154–6—type of the Inner Life 154–6—her tact 155, 161, 164, 165—her feminine delicacy 156, 161, 162, 166—her wifely devotion 156. Lady Macbeth under temptation 159—in the deed of murder 161—in the discovery 163—her fainting 164—under the strain of concealment 165—her tact in the Ghost Scene 165—her gentleness to Macbeth 166—her break-down in madness 166.

Macbeth, Lord and Lady, as a Study in Character-Contrast 144 and Chapter VII, 333—rests on the Antithesis of the Practical and Inner Life 147–56. The Contrast traced through the action of the play 156–67—relations at the beginning of the play 156–8—first impulse to crime from Macbeth 156—the Temptation 158–61—the meeting after their separate temptations 160–1—the Deed 161–3—the Concealment 163–5—the Nemesis 165–7.

Macbeth, other Characters in. Banquo: his attitude to the supernatural compared with Macbeth's 154, 159, 390–1—the attempt against Banquo and Fleance the end of Macbeth's success and beginning of his failure 127—binds together the Rise and Fall 137—Macbeth's exultation over it 153—the Banquo Action balances the Macduff Action 129—

gives unity to the Rise 127–9—partakes the triple form of the whole play 142.
Fleance: *see* Banquo.
Lennox 128, 163. Macduff: massacre of his family 130, 141—his position in the scene with Malcolm 140, 340—the Macduff Action balances the Banquo Action 129—gives unity to the Fall 129–30—partakes triple form of the whole play 142—example of Oracular Action 392–3.
Malcolm 139, 340. The Porter 348. The Witches 129, 134, 135, 136, 137, 139, 141—an example of the Supernatural intensifying human action 390–2—their different behaviour to Macbeth and Banquo 390–2—their exact function in the play 392—the Witches' Action an Enveloping Action 405, 143—partakes the triple form of the whole play 143.
Macbeth, Incidents and Scenes in: Witches Scene 158–9, 390–2—Apparitions Scene 130, 135, 140—Ghost Scene 165–6, 339—Proclamation of Cumberland 135, 151, 388—Dagger Scene 153, 340—Discovery Scene 163—Flight of Duncan's Sons 139, 164, 388—Macduff with Malcolm in England 140, 340—the Sleep-walking 166–7—Final Combat 389.
Macbeth, Plot of: Technical Analysis 405.—The interweaving of Nemesis and Destiny 127 and Chapter VI—its Action multiple in form 127, 358. *Macbeth* as a Nemesis Action 127–30—the Rise 127—the Fall 129—the Rise and Fall together 127. *Macbeth* as an Oracular Action 130–7—the Rise 134—the Fall 135—the Rise and Fall together 136.
Macbeth as an Irony Action 139–43—the Rise 139—the Fall 140—the Rise and Fall together 141. Affords examples of Enveloping Action (the Witches) 362—Balance 367—Parallelism and Contrast 367. Movement of the Play in four Stages: The Temptation 158–61—The Deed 161–3—The Concealment 163–5—The Nemesis 165–7. The Rise and Fall a single Motive 395.

Madness distinguished from Passion 209—connected with inspiration 218—madness of Lear: its gradual on-coming in waves of hysterical passion 210—change in its character after the Centrepiece 215—it makes the Passion-Climax of the main Plot 209—the madness of passion 217—madness of Edgar: the madness of idiocy 217–8—feigned 215—common Climax of the passions of the Underplot 215–8—madness of the Fool: professional madness 218–23—madness-duett 217–8—madness-trio 218, 223.
Masque in *The Tempest* 248, 263.
Measure for Measure, Play of 372, 352 (note).
Mechanical Construction 326–7, and Chapters II and III generally. Reduction of Difficulties 326—Constructive Economy 326—Constructive Processes 326—Constructive Conventionalities 327–8—Constructive Unity 328–9.
Mechanical Details utilised 77.
Mechanical Difficulties, their Reduction 326, 76–7—the three months' interval in the Story of the Jew 77—the loss of Antonio's ships 77—not always necessary to solve these 77.
Mechanical Personages 75, 326, 329—their multiplication in Romantic Drama 75—in *The Tempest* resemble Greek Chorus 282—and connected with the Central Idea 282.
Melancholy, Morbid Humour of 302.
Melodrama 118.
Mephistopheles compared with Richard 92.

Merchant of Venice, The, Play of: as an illustration of the construction of Drama out of Story 43-89—Story as the Raw Material of the Romantic Drama 43—the two main Stories in the *Merchant of Venice* considered as Raw Material 43—Story of the Jew gives scope for Nemesis 44-51—Antonio side of the Nemesis 47-9—Shylock side of the Nemesis 49-51—Caskets Story gives scope for Idealisation 51-7—Problem of Judgment by Appearances idealised 52-4—its solution: Character as an element in Judgment 54-7—characters of the three Suitors 55-6. Working up of the two Main Stories 58 and Chapter II. Reduction of Difficulties 58-66—Monstrosity in Shylock's Character met by Dramatic Hedging 58-61—Difficulties as to the pound of flesh 61-6—significance of the discussion on interest 61-4. Interweaving of the two Stories 66-73—assistance it gives to the movement of the play 66, 395—to the symmetry of the plot 67-9—union of a light and serious story 69-73. Further multiplication of Stories by the addition of an Underplot 74 and Chapter III. Paradox of simplicity by means of complexity 74-5—uses of the Jessica Story 75-87—characters of Jessica and Lorenzo 82-7—uses of the Rings Episode 87-9. The play illustrates every variety of Tone 344-5—Tone-Play 348.

Merchant of Venice, Characters in: Antonio 338—his Nemesis 47-9—general character 47—friendship with Bassanio 47, 85—conduct in Bond Scene 48-9, 61, 389—centre of the serious side of the play 69-70—the loss of his ships 77—his sadness 342—his pathetic humour 346. Arragon 55, 333, 344. Bassanio: friendship with Antonio 47, 85—as a suitor 56—his part in the Bond Scene 61—in the Trial 73—in the Rings Episode 72, 88—a scholar 76—set off by Lorenzo 86—a Link Personage 88, 365—seen at a disadvantage in the play 86, 331—example of Tone-Clash 346. Bellario 66. Duke 64, 65. Gobbo 76, 345. Gratiano 60, 76, 84, 333, 342, 344. Jessica, her Story 75-87, 68, &c.—her character 82-7—a compensation to Shylock 80—her attraction to Portia 85—foil to Portia 86—in Moonlight Scene 339. Launcelot 76, 83, 84, 344. Lorenzo: his character 85-7—its alleged inconsistency 331—a foil to Bassanio 86—in Moonlight Scene 339. Morocco 55, 333, 344. Nerissa 76, 333, 344. Portia as centre of the lighter side of the play 69-70, 344—in the Trial Scene 49-51, 65-6, 70-3—her plea an evasion 65—playing with the situation 70-2—her outburst on mercy 73, 344—the Rings Stratagem 72—relations with Jessica 85-7—her character 88-9. Salarino 48, 60, 76, 84—Salanio 60, 76—Salerio 76. Shylock as a study of Nemesis 49-51—in the Trial Scene 49-51, 338—his character 59-61—sentence on him 60, 80, 382—relation with Jessica 78-81, 83. Tubal 60, 76, 79, 333, 339.

Merchant of Venice, Incidents and Scenes in: Bond Scene 48-9, 61-4, 389—Scene of Bassanio's Choice 55, 56, 68, 348, 371—Scene between Shylock and Tubal 79, 339. Trial Scene 49—its difficulties 64-6—its mixture of passions 70-2, 73—as an Incident 338—its Comic Irony 342—its Tone-Clash 346—sentence on Shylock 384. Moonlight Scene 339.

Merchant of Venice, Plot of: Technical Analysis 401-2.—The Actions of the play Stories 43—Story of

the Jew a Nemesis Action 44–51 —Caskets Story a Problem Action 51–7—Link Story of Jessica 75–87—Sub-Action of Rings 87–9—Comic Relief Action of Launcelot 401. Interweaving of Stories 66–73, 366 — Connection 365—Linking 365—Balance 367—Contrast of Light and Serious Story 69–73 — External Circumstance analogous to Enveloping Action 401 (note 2). Exemplifies Simple Movement 370—Complicated Movement 370–1—Wave Line of Strain and Relief 372—unites Action and Passion Movement 373—exemplifies Contrary Motion (Interference) 375—Turning-points 378. Motive Force Nemesis 382, 44–51—Infatuation 389, 49—Caskets Story a Motive Action 395, 66.

Metrical Variation: Alternation of Verse and Prose as a device of Tone-Relief 349–52—as a device of Movement 352 (note)—extended to variations between one metre and another 353–5. **Illustrations:** *Tempest* 349–52 — *Measure for Measure* 352 (note)—*Winter's Tale* 352 (note)—*Macbeth* 353—*Love's Labour's Lost* 353–5.

Midsummer Night's Dream, Play of 111, 349.

'Milk of human kindness' 149–50.

Milton's *Paradise Lost* 11—minor poems 11, 12—versification 12, 14—his Satan 123—on the Inner Life 144—his use of the Background of Nature 192.

Mixture of Tones 344–5. [*See* Tone.]

Mob in *Julius Cæsar* 406, 188, 200.

Monte Cristo, Count of 380 (note).

Motion, Line of 371–2.

Motion, Modes of 373–7—Similar Motion 373—Contrary Motion 374–6—Convergent Motion 376–7. [*Compare* Tables 401–16.]

Motive, Dramatic 380–396. [*See* Motive Force.] Motive Action 395—Motive Circumstance 395—Motive Enveloping Action 395—Motive Personages 395—Motive Rise and Fall 395.

Motive Force 370, 380–96. [*Compare* the Tables 401–16.] **Leading Dramatic Motives:** Providence 380–1 [*compare* 264 and Chapter XIII]—Poetic Justice 381–2—Nemesis 382–3—Pathos 384–6—The Supernatural 386–94—Motive Force as a part of Design 394–6.

Motive Form 370–80.—Simple Movement 370 — Complicated Movement 370–1—Action and Passion Movement 371–3—Compound (or Relative) Movement 373–80, 398 [*see* Motion, Modes of]. — Turning-Points 377–80 [*Compare* the Tables 401–16.]

Movement: as an element in Drama 185—Arch form applied to 186—simple in *Julius Cæsar*, complex in *King Lear* 186, 202—traced in *Julius Cæsar* 185 and Chapter IX—in *King Lear* 202 and Chapter X—in *Othello* 239–45. Movement as one division of Action 324–5—applied to Character as Character-Development 335–7—applied to Passion 347–55 [*see* Tone-Movement] — applied to Plot 370 and Chapter XX [*see* Motive Form and Motive Force]. Movement shown in the Technical Analyses 401–16.

Movement, Centre of, Focus of 377–9. [*See* Catastrophe.]

Movement, Single* 370–3 — its division into Simple and Complicated 370—Action-Movement

* The reader will remember that 'Single' is used as antithetical to 'Compound' or 'Complex,' and 'Simple' to 'Complicated.' See note to page 74.

and Passion-Movement 371-3—this distinction the basis of the main division of Shakespeare's plays 372-3—varieties of Passion-Movement 372. Compound Movement 373-80—general idea 373 — its three Modes of Motion: Similar Motion 373—Contrary Motion 374-6—Convergent Motion 376-7.
Movement, Varieties of: Single* 370—Compound 373-80—Simple* and Complicated* 373—Action and Passion 372-3—Regular Arch 372—Inclined Plane 372—Wave 372—Similar 373—Contrary 374-6—Convergent 376-8. [*Compare* Tables 401-16.]

Multiplication of Actions 359—of Stories 74. [*See* Story.]
Mysteries of Paris 381 (note).
Mysteries of Providence 272, &c. [*See* Providence, Personal.]

Nature, Miranda a child of 249.
Natural Savage (Caliban) 250.
Nemesis as a dramatic idea 44—ancient and modern conception 44-5—its change with change in the idea of Destiny 126—its distinction from Justice 44—connection with Fortune 44—with risk 45—proverbs of Nemesis 46—connection with *hybris* 49. Nemesis needed to counterbalance Richard's Villainy 106—woven into history in *Richard III* 107 and Chapter V—a system of Nemesis Actions in the Underplot of *Richard III* 108-19—modes of emphasising 114-8—its multiplication a suitable background to Richard's character 118. Nemesis interwoven with Destiny in *Macbeth* 125 and Chapter VI—applied to the Plot of *Macbeth* 127-30. Nemesis as a Dramatic Effect 342—as a Dramatic Motive 382-3.
Nemesis, Varieties of: Surprise 47—Expectation and Satisfaction 51—Unlooked-for Source 383—Equality, or Measure for Measure 49, 120, 127, 208, 382—Sureness or Delay 120, 382—Suddenness 198, 382—Repetition and Multiplication 382, 107 and Chapter V generally—Self-inflicted 383—the Prize of Guilt 383—Combined with Mockery 383 and compare 115-9—Double 47, 205-6, 207-8—Cross Nemeses 401, 403, compare 47, 51.
Nemesis, Illustrations of: Anne 113—Antonio 47—Buckingham 109—Cæsar 197—Cassius 342—Clarence 108—the Conspirators in *Julius Cæsar* 201, 382—Edmund 208, 216-7—King Edward IV 108—Gloucester (in *King Lear*) 207-8, 216-7—Goneril and Regan 206, 383—Hastings 109—Hippolytus 45—in the Story of the Jew 46—Lear 205-6, 209-15, 220-3, 383 — Lycurgus 45 — Macbeth 335-7, 165-7, 383—Lady Macbeth 166—Macduff 129—Pentheus 45—Polycrates 45—Queen and her kindred (*Richard III*) 108—Regan 206, 383—Richard III 119-24, 382—Shylock 49, 382—Wars of the Roses 111-3—Iago 238, 245.

Observation as a Stage of Inductive Science 318-9.
Œdipus as an example of Oracular Action 134—of Irony 138.
Omens 193, 201. [*See* Supernatural.]
Oracular Action 130-4—applied to Macbeth 134-7—as an example of Supernatural agency illuminating human action 392-3—compared with the illumination of history 392. Illustrations:

* See Note on previous page.

of the first type 131, 134, 135—of the second 132, 134—of the third 133, 136.

Othello, Play of: As a Study in Character and Plot 225 and Chapter XI. Close connection of Character and Plot 225—Grouping of the Personages around the idea of Jealousy 225–7—Plot founded on Intrigue 227—Simplicity of Movement of the Play 239–45. Affords 1 examples of Tone-Relief 348 ; Metrical variations 350, 353—Rymer on this play 8, 9.

Othello, Characters in: Emilia 233, 239; Bianca 226, 227, 236. Cassio: his connection with Jealousy 226—intrigues directed against him 231, 234, 236. Clown 348. Desdemona: her lack of Jealousy 226—her simplicity 229—tragedy of Othello and Desdemona 229—her connection with Iago's intrigues 234. Iago: his connection with Jealousy 226—his intrigues 230, Nemesis upon him 238 ; compared with Richard III 92, 101. Othello: his connection with Jealousy 226—his simplicity 229—tragedy of Othello and Desdemona 229—Intrigues of Iago against him 233. Roderigo 226, 228, 230, 235, 236.

Othello, Incidents and Scenes in: Desdemona cast off by Brabantio 240, 339—the Arrival in Cyprus 241—the Fête at Cyprus 241–2—the Suggestion Scenes 242–4—the Murder Scene 244.

Othello, Plot of: Technical Analysis 409–10.—Its connection with Character 225—founded on Intrigue 227. Economy of the Plot 227–39—Three tragic actions 227–30—Four Intrigues 230–4—Economic devices drawing these together 234–7—Reaction upon Iago 238–9. Movement of the Play 239–45—Stage of Preparation 240—Transition 241—the Plot working 242–4—Climax and Reaction 244–5—Connection of the Movement with Poetic Justice 267.

Outer and Inner Life 144–6. [*See* Antithesis.]

Overwinding as an illustration for the Movement of *Macbeth* 137.

Paradox of simplicity by means of complexity 74.

Parallelism 367–9 [*see* Action, Economy of]—between Main and Underplot in *King Lear* 206–9, 367–9, 407—other illustrations in the Technical Analyses 401–16.

Passion 338—as an element in Drama 185–6—its connection with Movement *ib.*—as an Elementary Topic in Dramatic Criticism 324—subdivided 325. **Examples**: *Julius Cæsar* 185 and Chapter IX; *King Lear* 202 and Chapter X.

'Passion-Drama' as substitute for 'Tragedy' 372–3, and Tables 401–16.

Passion, Interest of: 338 and Chapter XVIII—general description 338—unity in Passion-Interest 338–43 [*see* Incident, Situation, and Effect]—complexity in Passion-Interest 343–7 [*see* Tone]—Movement (or Succession) applied to Passion 347–55, 325 [*see* Tone-Play and Tone-Relief].

Passion, Line of 372.

Passion-Movement 347–55, 325.

Passion-Strain 186—Strain and Reaction 371. **Examples**: *Julius Cæsar* 191–201; *King Lear* 208, 215.

Pastoral Conventionality 306–7—in conflict with Humour 307–9.

Pathos as a Dramatic Motive 384–6.

Perspective in Plot 118.
Physical passion or madness in Lear 210–15—external shocks as a cause of madness 215.
Plato's *Republic* and its treatment of liberty 170.

Plot as an Elementary Topic in Dramatic Criticism 325—the intellectual side of Action, or pure Action 325—Shakespeare a Master of Plot 69, 356—close connection between Plot and Character illustrated by *Richard III* 107 and Chapter V—and in *Othello* 225—*Richard III* an example of complexity in Plot 107—perspective in Plot 118—*Macbeth* an example of subtlety in Plot 125, 142—Plot analytical in its nature 186—simple in *Julius Cæsar*, complex in *King Lear* 202—effect on the estimation of Plot of dissociation from the theatre 322—the most intellectual of all the elements of Drama 323—Technical Analyses of Plots 401–16.
Plot, Interest of: 356 and Chapters XIX, XX.—Definition of Plot 356–7—its dignity as an element of literary effect *ib*—its connection with design and pattern 356, 358, 360, 108, 111, 118, 202. Statical Interest of Plot 357 and Chapter XIX.—Unity applied to Plot 358–9 [*see* Action, Single; Action, Forms of]—complexity applied to Plot 359–69 [*see* Action, Analysis of; Economy]—complexity of Action distinguishes Modern Drama from Ancient 359—Unity of Action becomes in Modern Drama Harmony of Actions 359. Dynamic Interest of Plot 370 and Chapter XX.—Movement applied to Plot 370. [See Motive Form; Motive Force.]

Poetic Justice 381–4. [*See* Justice.]
Polycrates, Story of 45, 126.

Portia: see *Merchant of Venice*; *Julius Cæsar*.
Practical Life 144–6. [*See* Antithesis.]
Preparation as a Dramatic Effect 327, 329—illustrated in *The Tempest* 270.
Problem Action 202–6, 224, 358—of Judgment by Appearances 52–6.
Prose, Alternation of with Verse 349. [*See* Metrical Variation.]
Proverbs of Nemesis 46.

Providence as a Dramatic Motive 380–1, 266, 125—in prose fiction 380 (note)—connected with Poetic Justice 266—may include any principle suggested by actual experience 267.
Providence, Personal: as a Central Idea for *The Tempest* 268 and Chapter XIII—distinguished from Providence in General 268—its genesis in the play 270—sorrows of 269—restraint of *ib*.—exercised in the Spirit world 270—connected with Ferdinand and Miranda 271—Mysteries of providential working 272–80—connected with Antonio and Sebastian 272—with the comic business 274—with the Main Story 276—its climax of Judgment 276—its climax of Mercy 279—Self-Renunciation as climax of Personal Providence 280.

Punch as modern counterpart to Court Fool 219, 301.
Puns as an expression of hysterical emotion 346, 162—compare 288–9.
Puritan Revolution, its effect on Dramatic Criticism 322.

Quilp compared with Richard III 92, 94.

Rationalisation as a mode of treating the Supernatural 246, 326, 329, 252–9. Illustrated in *The Tem-*

pest: arbitrary causation 252—casual permeated by design *ib.*—barrier between mind and matter breaking down 253—passage from real to supernatural 253—supernatural agents 254—nature humanised 255.
Raw Material of the Romatic Drama 43.
Reaction 198. [*See* Passion-Strain.]
Reduction of Difficulties an element in Dramatic workmanship 58, 326, 329—illustrated: *Merchant of Venice* 58-66.
Relief 348. [*See* Tone.]
Renaissance and its influence on critical method 4, 18, 320—Shakespeare a type 397.
Representation 321. [*See* Stage.]
Resolution 67, 370 [*see* Complication]—Resolving Force 67.—Further Resolution 379-80, 398, and Tables 401-16.
Reviewing, the lyrics of prose 22.
Rhymed couplet 30—its usage by Shakespeare 135, 353-5.

Richard III, Play of: an example of the intimate relation between Character and Plot 107—treated from the side of Character 90 and Chapter IV—from the side of Plot 107 and Chapter V—affords examples of Situations 339—of Dramatic Foreshadowing 342.
Richard III, Character of: 90 and Chapter IV—Ideal Villainy 90-1, 330—in scale 91—development 91, 335—not explained by sufficient motive 92—an end in itself 93. Richard as an Artist in Villainy 93-6—absence of emotion 93—intellectual enjoyment of Villainy 95-6. His Villainy ideal in its success 96-103—fascination of irresistibility 97, 103—use of unlikely means 98—economy 99—imperturbability and humour 100-1—fairness 101—recklessness suggesting resource 101, 332—inspiration as distinguished from calculation 102—his keen touch for human nature 102.
Ideal and Real Villainy 104—Ideal Villainy and Monstrosity 105. [Also called Gloster.]
Richard III, Characters in: Anne 94, 113, 115 [*see* Wooing Scene]—Buckingham 91, 96, 100, 109, 115, 118, 121, 333—Catesby 117, 333—Clarence 108, 114, 116—his Children 109—his Murderers 334—Derby 117—Dorset 120—Elizabeth 121—Ely 100, 121—Hastings 91, 98, 109, 114, 115, 117, 333, 342—King Edward IV 99, 108, 114, 117—King Edward V 100, 333-4, 342—Lord Mayor 99—Margaret 94, 112, 115, 339—Queen and her kindred 98, 108, 114, 115, 116—Richmond 120, 121—Stanley 117, 123—Tyrrel 94, 333—York 99, 333-4—Duchess of York 95, 111.
Richard III, Incidents and Scenes in: Wooing Scene 339—analysed 103-4—an example of fascination 94, 97—Richard's blunders 102, 332. Margaret and the Courtiers 94, 339—Reconciliation Scene 99, 117—Murder of Clarence 116, 334, 338.
Richard III, Plot of: 107 and Chapter V. How Shakespeare weaves Nemesis into History *ib.*—Its Underplot as a System of Nemeses 108—its Enveloping Action a Nemesis 111—further multiplication of Nemesis 112—special devices for neutralising the weakening effect of such multiplication 114-8—the multiplication needed as a background to the villainy 118—Motive Force of the whole a Nemesis Action 119. Fall of Richard 119-23—protracted not sudden 119, 382—Turning-point delayed 120—tantalisation and mockery in Richard's fate 121-4—Climax in sleep and the Apparitions 122—final stages 123—play begins and ends in peace 123.

Technical Analysis of the Plot 403–4.—Its Enveloping Action 361—Turning-points 378—Similar Motion 373—Motive Action 395–6.

Roman political life 169–71 and Chapter VIII generally—its subordination of the individual to the State 170—a change during Cæsar's absence 180, 183.
Romantic Drama: Shakespeare its Great Master 40, 43—its connection with Stories of Romance 43.
Romeo and Juliet, Play of 9.
Rymer the champion of 'Regular' Criticism 8—on Portia 8—and *Othello* generally 8—on *Paradise Lost* 11—on Blank Verse 14—on Modern Drama 17—on *Catiline* 17—on Classical Standards 18—his *Edgar* 21.

Satire, Dramatic 3.
Scale of Passion-Tones 344.
Science of Dramatic Art 40, 317. [*See* Criticism.]
Self-Renunciation as climax of Personal Providence 280.
Serious as a Tone 344.
Shakespeare-Criticism, History of, in five stages 8–11.
Shakespeare's English 15—his Sonnets 12.
Situation, Dramatic 339–40.
Stage-Representation: an element in Interpretation 98—an allied art to Drama 321—separated in the present treatment 321–2—in exposition but not in idea 322–3.
Statics of Plot 356 and Chapter XIX.
Stationary Action 401 (note).
Stoicism 144, 173, 174, 175, 179, 188.
Storm in *Julius Cæsar* 192–6, 214 [*see* Background of Nature]—in *King Lear* 214–5.

Story as the Raw Material of the Shakespearean Drama 43 and Chapter I—construction of Drama out of Stories illustrated in *The Merchant of Venice* 43–89—two Stories worked into one design in *The Merchant of Venice* 58 and Chapter II – in *King Lear* 206—Multiplication and Interweaving of Stories 66–73—effects on Movement 66–7—of Symmetry 67–9—interweaving of a Light with a Serious Story 69–73—effects of Human Interest 70—of Plot 70—of Passion 70–3.
Story of the Jew 43, 44–51. Its twofold Nemesis 46–51—its difficulties met 58–66—Complicated and Resolved 67—connection with the Central Scene 68—its mechanical difficulties 76–8.
Story of the Caskets 44, 51–7.—An illustration of Idealisation 51—careful contrivance of inscriptions and scrolls 53, 54—its problem 52—and solution 54—connection with the central scene 68.
Story of Jessica 75–87. Its connection with the central scene 68—an Underplot to *The Merchant of Venice* 75–87—its use in attaching to Plot the Mechanical Personages 75—and generally assisting Mechanism 76–7—helps to reduce difficulties in the Main Plot 77–81—a Link Action 81—assists Symmetry and Balance 82—assists Characterisation 82–7.
Story [or Episode] of the Rings: its uses in the Underplot of *The Merchant of Venice* 87–9—compare 68, 72.

Strain of Passion 186. [*See* Passion-Strain.]
Sub-Actions: 359—Launcelot 76, 401—Cæsar and Antony 374, 406—in Technical Analyses 401–16.
Succession as an element of Action 325.
Supernatural, The, as a Dramatic Motive 386–94. Different use in Ancient and Modern Drama 387—

rationalised in Modern Drama 387. In an objective form as Irony 387–8—in a subjective form as Infatuation 388–9.
Supernatural Agencies 389–94—not to be explained as hallucinations 390—Shakespeare's usage of Supernatural Agency: to intensify human action 390–2—to illuminate human action 392–4—the Oracular 392–3—the Dramatic Background of Nature 393–4—its difficulties, modes of reducing: 246, &c.—Derationalisation 247—Rationalisation 252—Addition of kindred Reality 259. **Illustrations**: the Apparitions to Richard 122—the Ghost of Banquo 165–6—the Apparitions in *Macbeth* 135, &c.—the Witches 158, 390–2—portents in *Julius Cæsar* 193–4—the Ghost of Cæsar 201—omen of Eagles to Cassius 201.
Symmetry as a dramatic element 68—as a form of Economy 366–9. **Illustrations**: *Merchant of Venice* 67–8; *King Lear* 207–9, 367–9.
Systematisation as a Stage of scientific progress 318, 319.

Table of Elementary Topics 325, 329—of general Topics 398.
Taste as condensed Experience 6. [*See* Criticism.]

Tempest, Play of: as a drama of Enchantment 246 and Chapter XII—as a study in Dramatic Colouring 262 and Chapter XII—as a study in Central Ideas 264 and Chapter XIII—as a Study in Personal Providence 264 and Chapter XIII—as a study in the Supernatural 386. Dryden's alteration of 10. Its Dramatic Background of Nature 247—Masque in 248—Metrical Variations 350–2.
Tempest, Characters in: Alonso 277–8, 279. Antonio 273, 277–8, 279, 339. Ariel: as an Elemental Being 256–8—delivered by Prospero 270—Ariel's Story 270—dismissed 281. Boatswain 282. Caliban: as a Natural Savage 250—as an Elemental Being 258–9—his origin 258—his connection with Stephano and Trinculo 261—Caliban's story 271—his use of verse and prose 351–2. Ferdinand 250, 252, 260, 271. Gonzalo: 248, 274, 279. 280—as a leading Mechanical Personage 282—his connection with the Boatswain 282—as a Chorus-leader 282—his relations to Providence 283. Miranda: as a Child of Nature 249—her connection with Ferdinand 260, 271, 281. Prospero: Chapter XII *passim*, Chapter XIII *passim* [*see* under Providence, Personal]—his story 270—his relations with Ariel 257, 262, 270, 279—his relations with Caliban 250, 271—his connection with Ferdinand and Miranda 260, 271—his connection with the comic personages 275—his connection with the climax 280, 340. Sebastian 273, 277–8, 279. Stephano 261, 274. Sycorax 258, 259. Trinculo 261, 274.
Tempest, Incidents and Scenes in: The Masque 248—Quarrel of Caliban and Prospero 250—Expulsion from Milan 252—Quarrel of Ariel and Prospero 257—Opening Tempest 269—Ariel's Deliverance 270—Caliban's revolt 271—Conspiracy of Antonio and Sebastian 273, 339—Quarrel of Trinculo and Stephano 274—Nemesis Scene 276–8—Universal Restoration 279—Prospero's Renunciation 280, 340.
Tempest, Plot of: Technical Analysis 411–2.—Its Underplot: Story of Ferdinand and Miranda as a study of love at first sight 260—connected with the Movement 271—

Story of the Butler and Jester as a study of intoxication 261—connected with the Movement 274. Enveloping Action of Enchantment 362 — Example of Dependence 366. [*See* next paragraph.]

Tempest, Movement of: founded on Personal Providence 266 and Chapter XIII—opening scene a prologue 268 — Movement suspended 269—Classical unities of time and place 269—genesis of the providential position 270—Prospero's government of the spiritual world outside the Movement 270—Movement resumed 271—Connection with Movement of Ferdinand and Miranda Story 271—of Antonio's conspiracy 273—of the comic matter 274—of the Mechanical Personages 282—climax of the Movement 276—higher climax 279—climax extended to Prospero 280. Affords an example of Counter-Action 374—of Similar and Contrary Motion 374-5. Its Turning-points 378 (note)—Further Resolution 380. Complicating and Resolving Personages 395.

Textual Emendations: of *Merchant of Venice* i. iii. 42, page 61 (note)—of *As You Like It* iii. ii. 163, page 309 (note)—of *Lear* ii. ii. 170–7, page 384 (note).

Thackeray on the Inner Life 144.

Theseus and Hippolyta 111.

Tito Melema compared with Richard 91.

Tone as a dramatic term: the application of complexity to Passion 325, 343.—Passion-Tones 343-4—Scale of Tones 344—Mixture of Tones 344-5—Tone-Clash 345—Humour a climax of Tone-Clash 346—Tone-Storm 347. Tone-Movement: the application of succession to Passion-Tones 325, 347—Tone-Play and Tone-Relief 347-8. Devices of Tone-Relief 349-55—Word-Play 349, 288-9—Alternation of Verse and Prose 349-55—place of Tone in Topics of Dramatic Criticism 398.

Topics as a technical term in science 319-20—topical stage of development in sciences 319—applied to Dramatic Criticism 319-20 and Chapter XVI—Elementary Topics of Dramatic Criticism 325, 329—General Table of Topics 398.

'Tragedy' or 'Passion-Drama' 372-3—Tragedies of Lear 205-6, &c., 209-15, 220-3—of Cordelia and Kent 206—of Goneril and Regan 206—of Gloucester 207-8, 216-7—of Edgar 208, 216-7—of Edmund 208, 216-7. Systems of Tragedies 208-9.

Tragic as a Tone 344.

Turning-points 377-80 — compare Tables 401-16. Double in Shakespeare's plays: Catastrophe or Focus of Movement and Centre of Plot 378-9—occasionally a Further Resolution 379-80—Illustrations 377-80—compare 68, 120, 127, 186, 198, 205, 216-7.

Underplot 74 and Chapter III. Illustrations: *Merchant of Venice* 74 and Chapter III, 401—*Richard III* 108-19, 403—*Lear* 206-9, 215-8, 223, 360, 376-7, 407-8.

Union of Light and Serious Stories 69-73.

Unities, the Three 14—Scenic 327, 329—Unity Devices 328. Illustration in *The Tempest* 269, 411-2.

Unity as an element of Action 324—applied to Character 330—to Passion 338—to Plot (Action) 358.

Universal Restoration in *The Tempest* 279.

Unstable equilibrium in morals 45, 205.

Utilisation of the Mechanical 76-8, 326, 329.

Variorum Shakespeare 8.
Verse, Alternation of, with Prose 349–52. [*See* Metrical Variation.]
Villainy as a subject for art treatment 90—Ideal Villainy 90 and Chapter IV.

Wandering Jew, The 380 (note).
Wave-Form of Passion-Movement 372, 402—waves of hysterical passion in Lear 210–15.
Winter's Tale 352 (note).
Wit as a mental game 219, 288. [*See* Word-play.]
Witchcraft (Sycorax) 259.
Word-play as a dramatic weapon 288.
Workmanship, Dramatic: 58 and Chapter II, 326.

INDEX OF SCENES

ILLUSTRATED IN THE FOREGOING CHAPTERS.

*** *Clarendon type is used where the passage referred to approaches the character of an analysis of the scene.*

AS YOU LIKE IT.

Act II.

Sc. i. 304, 306.
iv. 308.
v. 305.
vii. 301, 302, 304, 306.

Act III.

Sc. ii. 308, 309, 310, 311.
iii. 308, 311.
v. 307.

Act IV.

Sc. i. 303, 305, 312.

Act V.

Sc. i. 308.
iv. 301, 304.

JULIUS CÆSAR.

Act I.

Sc. i. 180, 188–9.
ii. 172, 178–80, 180, 189–91.
iii. 191–4, 195–6.

Act II.

Sc. i. 171–2, 172, 174, 175–6, 176, 180–1, 187, 191, 194.
ii. 177, 194–5.
iii. 196.
iv. 196–7.

Act III.

Sc. i. 172–3, 177, 177–8, 182, 183, 196–9, 379.
ii. 175, 199–200.
iii. 180, 200.

Act IV.

Sc. i. 200.
ii. and **iii.** 172, 173–4, 182, 200–1.

Act V.

Scs. iii, v. 171, 172, 201.

KING LEAR.

Act I.

Sc. i. 203–5, 206, 379.
ii. 206.
iv. 210, 220–1.
v. 210–1, 221–2.

Act II.

Sc. i. 376.
ii. 384 (note).
iv. 209, 211–4, 222–3, 376.

Act III.

Sc. i. 209, 214, 215, 223.
ii. 209, 215, 223.
iii. 209, 215, 216.
iv. 209, 215, 216, 217–8, 223, 379.
v. 209, 377.
vi. 207, 209.
vii. 209, 216.

Act IV.

Sc. i. 216, 217.
vi. 215.

Act V.

Sc. iii. 208, 215.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

Act I.

Sc. i. 285, 286, 289, 291.
ii. 286, 291, 294, 295.

Act II.

Sc. i. 288, 290.

Act III.

Sc. i. 287, 292.

Act IV.

Sc. i. 288, 297.
ii. 286, 295.
iii. 287, 290, 291, 297.

Act V.

Sc. i. 286, 292, 297.
ii. 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 297, 298.

MACBETH

Act I.

Sc. iii. 135, 136, 141, 154, 158–9, 336, 390–2.
iv. 135, 150–1, 337, 388.
v. 149–50, 156, 159–60.
vii. 151–3, 157, 160–1.

Act II.

Sc. i. 153–4.
ii. 154, 155, 161–3, 337.
iii. 139–40, 163–4, 348, 388.
iv. 140, 164.

Act III.

Sc. i. 129, 154, 164–5.
ii. 154, 164–5, 336.
iii. 127, 405.
iv. 130, 154, 165–6, 405.
v. 389, 391.
vi. 128–9.

Act IV.

Sc. i. 130, 135–6, 140, 167, 391.
ii. 130, 140.
iii. 140–1.

Act V.

Sc. i. 166–7.
iii. 167.
v. 167.
vii. and viii. 130, 167, 378.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Act I.

Sc. i. 48, 61, 70, 76.
ii. 54, 56, 70.
iii. 48–9, 61–4, 389.

Act II.

Sc. i. 53.
ii. 76.
iii. 76, 84.
iv. 84, 85.
v. 60, 76, 83.
vi. 84, 85.
vii. 53, 55.
viii. 78.
ix. 55–6.

Act III.

Sc. i. 60, 76, 78, 79, 85.
ii. 54–5, 56, 67–9, 76, 78.
iii. 60, 76, 78.
iv. 85, 86.
v. 76, 85.

Act IV.

Scs. i. and ii. 49–51, 60, 64–6, 70–3, 80, 87–8, 88–9, 346, 384.

Act V.

Sc. i. 85.

OTHELLO.

Act I.

Sc. i. 228.
iii. 229, 231, 233, 234.

Act II.

Sc. i. 226, 233, 241.
ii. 241.
iii. 226, 230, 232, 237, 242.

Act III.

Sc. i. 348.
ii. 348.
iii. 225, 232, 240, **242–3**, 348.
iv. 227, 236, **243**.

Act IV.

Sc. i. 227, 236, **243**, 350.
ii. 233, 235.

Act V.

Sc. i. 227, 231, 236.
ii. 238, 239, 244, 245.

RICHARD III.

Act I.

Sc. i. 92–3, 96, 100, 101, 123.
ii. 93, 94, **96**, **97–8**, 99, 101, 102, **103–4**, 113.
iii. 95, 96, **111–3**, 115.
iv. 108, 114, **116**, 334.

Act II.

Sc. i. 99, 101, 108, 116, 117-8.
ii. 95, 100, 109, 111–2.

Act III.

Sc. i. 91, 99, 100.
ii. 109, **117**, 342.
iii. 114, 115, 120, 378.
iv. 98, 100, 114, 115.
v, vii. 96, 99.

Act IV.

Sc. i. 104, 111–2, 116.
ii. 110, 389, 372, 378.
iii. 94, **120–1**.
iv. 91, 95, 111–2, 115, 121–2.

Act V.

Sc. i. 115, 118.
iii. 95, **122–3**.
iv. and v. 123.

THE TEMPEST.

Act I.

Sc. i. 268, 283.
ii. **250–1**, 260, **269–72**, 283.

Act II.

Sc. i. **272–4**, 282, 283.
ii. 261, 274.

Act III.

Sc. i. 260, 272.
ii. 261, 274.
iii. **276–9**, 282.

Act IV.

Sc. i. 260, 261, 272, 274. (Masque), **248–9**, 253, 261.

Act V.

Sc. i. 260, 261, 272, 274, **279–81**, 282.

THE END.

UN[illegible]

14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED
LOAN DEPT.
This book is due on the last date stamped below, or on the date to which renewed.
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

NOV 10 1967 52
NOV 3 '67 -2 PM
APR 8 1968 7 8
RECEIVED
APR 5 '68 -12 M
MAY 15 1968
JUN 15
RECEIVED
JUN 26 '68 -11 AM
DEC 3 1968 3 7

JAN 18 1969 00
Renewed by phone
JAN 13 1969
RECEIVED
JAN 9 '69 -3 PM
LOAN DEPT.

LD 21A-60m-2,'67
(H241s10)476B

General Library
University of California
Berkeley

FC154099

U. C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES

C045972035

366041

thick
Natural
digest

932t
1927

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY